

**Agricultural  
Research  
Service**

**Office of the  
Deputy Administrator  
Administrative and Financial Management**

**February 2003**

# **CARE**

## **PROGRAM GUIDE**

**CONSOLIDATED ASSISTANCE,  
REVIEW, AND EVALUATION**

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## ABBREVIATIONS

AAO	Area Administrative Officer
AD	Area Director
ADAAFM	Associate Deputy Administrator, Administrative and Financial Management
ADO	Authorized Departmental Officer
ADODR	Authorized Departmental Officer's Designated Representative
ADP	Automated Data Processing (Resources)
A-E	Architect - Engineer
AFM	Administrative and Financial Management
AP	Assistance Provided
APMO	Area Property Management Officer
ARIS	Agricultural Research Information System
ARMPS	Annual Resource Management Plan System
ARS	Agricultural Research Service
AT	Administrative Technician
ATCA	Assistance Type Cooperative Agreement
AWE	Assistance with Exception
BDN	Bureau of Drugs and Narcotics
BPA	Blanket Purchase Agreement
CARE	Consolidated Assistance, Review, and Evaluation
CAS	Central Accounting System
CBD	Commerce Business Daily
CDSO	Collateral Duty Safety Officer
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
COM	Commendation
CRP	Consolidated Review Program
CRIS	Current Research Information System
CRAS	CRIS Resource Allocation Schedule
DAAFM	Deputy Administrator, Administrative and Financial Management
DR	Departmental Regulation
EFT	Electronic Funds Transfer
EO	Executive Order
ENR	Emergency Needs Request
FHCP	Federal Hazard Communication Program
FMD	Financial Management Division

*As of 02/27/2003*

FMFIA	Federal Manager's Financial Integrity Act
GAO	General Accounting Office
GSA	General Services Administration
GPO	Government Printing Office
HQ	Headquarters (ARS)
HCA	Head of Contracting Activity
HHS-PMS	Health and Human Services=Payment Management System
HPRL	High Priority Requirements List
IMOU	Individual Memorandum of Understanding
LC	Location Coordinator
LAPC	Local Area Program Coordinator
LAO/T	Location Administrative Officer/Technician
LOTS	Location Obligation Tracking System
MCO	Management Control Officer
MMOU	Master Memorandum of Understanding
MMR	Monthly Management Report
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NA	No Assurance
NFC	National Finance Center
NPS	National Program Staff
OFM	Office of Financial Management
OJT	On The Job Training
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
OO	Office of Operations (USDA)
OPM	Office of Personnel Management
PAL	Pesticide Applications License
PM	Program Management
PROP	Personal Property System
REWO	Real Estate Warrant Officer
RL	Research Leader
RSA	Research Support Agreement
RSS	Radiation Safety Staff

USDA United States Department of Agriculture

VXP Vendor Express Program

## KEY AREA/LOCATION PERSONNEL

Area Director (AD) - Individual at the Area level who is responsible for providing leadership and direction on all Program Management matters within the Area, including all Centers, laboratories and Locations.

Area Administrative Officer (AAO) - Individual at the Area level who oversees the administrative functions at the Area level, i.e. Budget, Human Resources, Procurement, Engineering, Safety and ADP. Also provides technical guidance and leadership within the Area to the administrative field structure.

Area Office Section Heads - Individuals at the Area level who report to the AAO and are responsible for providing technical support/guidance to the field in their particular sections, i.e. Budget, Human Resources, Procurement, Engineering, Safety and ADP. May have staffs they supervise.

Institute/Center Director (ID/CD) - Individual responsible for supervising Research Leaders and directing the research effort in a laboratory.

Laboratory Director (LD) - Research Scientist who is responsible for supervising the Research Leaders and directing the research effort in a laboratory.

Location Coordinator (LC) - Laboratory Director or Research Leader who, in addition to their research duties, coordinates the administrative operations at the Location and work sites. Supervises the LAO/T.

Research Leader (RL) - Research Scientist who is responsible for the overall operation of a Management Unit, which could comprise multiple research efforts (CRIS projects).

Lead Scientist (LS) - Research Scientist who is responsible for providing technical leadership to a group of scientists and support staff to accomplish a defined mission within a Research Management Unit. Supervised by the RL.

Location Administrative Officer/Technician/Clerk (LAO/T/C) - Individual who has responsibility for the overall administrative operations at the Location and its work sites. Provides supervisory/technical supervision to a staff consisting of one or more of the following: Budget Assistant, Accounting Technician, Purchasing Agent, Personnel Clerk, Administrative Clerk, and/or maintenance personnel. The specific functions of the individual staff members vary from Location to Location.

Location Radiation Protection Officer (LRPO) - Individual who, in addition to their regular duties, coordinates the Radiation Safety Program at each ARS Location that uses x-ray producing devices or radioactive materials.

Cluster Environmental Protection Specialists (CEPS) - Individuals who are supervised by the Area Office, but are located at field sites. Responsible for managing the Environmental Program at more than one Location.

Collateral Duty Safety Officer (CDSO) - Individual who, in addition to their regular duties, coordinates the implementation, administration and operation of the Safety and Health Program at the Location.

## INTRODUCTION

For years ARS has measured "quality" management with a concentration toward "conforming to requirements." This "quality measure" was and continues to be a basic threshold of quality that is established by Congress, defined by legal or subject matter experts, and interpreted through administrative policy.

Through the use of Management Reviews, Mutual Assistance Reviews, Verification Audits, and Compliance Reviews, ARS established "quality measures" relating to "conforming to requirements" and tracked and reported findings and accomplishments under the Procurement Certification Program, Vulnerability Assessment Program, and the Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act. This tracking and reporting was carried out as separate programs under the USDA umbrella of the Management Control Program.

Concurrent with this Management Control Program, ARS was carrying out the Productivity Improvement Program. Under this Program, ARS made major quality improvements as was reflected in the ARS Productivity Improvement Efforts report of September 1986. These efforts continued in 1987, 1988, and 1989, through the Location Support Study, LAO/T Training Program, Location Automated System Task Force (LOCFORCE), Automated Procurement System Task Force, and the Personnel Demonstration Project.

In 1989, the Management Control Program and Productivity Improvement Program were moved into the stages of a Consolidated (Management) Review Program (CRP) and Total Quality Management (TQM) Program. With this move, "conforming to requirements" was de-emphasized while "meeting customer expectations" became the focused aim of TQM. This provided ARS with the opportunity to consolidate review/quality programs and focus on internal quality concerning how the customers and providers of administrative operational services interact, and what is the actual administrative operational services delivery.

Within this setting, ARS Administrative and Financial Management (AFM) seized the opportunity to consolidate its review programs and implement a TQM approach. Recognizing that TQM results from "people" (customers and providers) who care, ARS opted to call this program CARE - "Consolidated Assistance, Review and Evaluation."

The CARE Program includes the major strategy areas for TQM. These areas are:

- Top Management Support and Direction: the Deputy Administrator's implementing memo, the signed Charter, and appointment of the Contracting and Assistance Division Director for leadership, subsequently reorganized under the Office of Deputy Administrator.
- Employee Involvement: the CARE Management Team makeup (Locations, Areas, and HQ); planned interaction with Locations, Areas, AFM Divisions and customers/providers of administrative support services; and liaison between AFM and Program Management.

- Communications: announcing and promoting the CARE Program; input from all levels; direct interaction during reviews; and, reporting/keeping all informed.
- Standards and Measures: Areas/AFM Divisions recommendation of sites/functions; Assurance Statements under the USDA CRP; use of existing review guides and questions; and development of quality measures against administrative functions.
- Training: TQM training for Areas/AFM Divisions; CARE Management Team building; OJT by Management Team.
- Rewards and Recognition: recognition of quality work being done at Locations; rewarding those noted; using quality techniques to assist others.

The following approaches for the CARE Program have been selected:

- Use Team Building techniques to establish a cohesive/sharing group.
- Review each Location once approximately every 8 years.
- Use Review Teams that:
  - Are composed of individuals who represent the three organizational levels, (Locations, Area, and Headquarters) and are from Areas other than the one being reviewed.
  - Are led by a selected member.
  - Represent all selected functional areas.

Because the CARE Program is aimed at quality through "people," the critical element of its success is the members of the CARE Management Team pool. These members must possess the following qualities:

- They must care about the quality of the administrative operational services provided and the programs/clientele supported.
- They must have a "proven track record" for providing quality administrative operational services/support.
- They must be considered experts in their functional areas by their peers, clientele, and management.
- They must be willing to share their skills and techniques with others.

- They must be open and willing to recognize quality administrative operational services being provided and techniques being used.
- They should have knowledge/ability in the overall administrative management functions of ARS.

While the CARE Program consolidates ARS internal reviews, it is recognized that some external reviews/audits and some internal special interest reviews will continue. To the degree possible CARE review findings will be used to supplement these reviews. The following are not fully covered by the CARE Program:

- GAO Audits
- GSA Space Utilization Surveys
- USDA Procurement Management Reviews
- ARS Special Interest Reviews
- ARS Imprest Fund Audit

Findings and recommendations of the CARE Program will be used to support the:

- USDA Consolidated Review Program
- USDA Procurement Management Reviews
- USDA Productivity Improvement Program

In addition the CARE Program will be used to develop quality measures for administrative operations/management in the true spirit of TQM.

The following Charter, Organizational Chart, and Review Process has been established to implement and guide the CARE Program.

## BACKGROUND REFERENCES

- EO 12637 and OMB CIRCULAR A-123, Internal Control System
- OMB CIRCULAR A-127, FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS
- OMB CIRCULAR A-130, MANAGEMENT OF FEDERAL INFORMATION RESOURCES
- FEDERAL MANAGERS' FINANCIAL INTEGRITY ACT (FMFIA) OF 1982
- EO 12352, FEDERAL PROCUREMENT REFORM
  - Management Control over Government Procurement
- 29 CFR 1910.1200, FEDERAL HAZARD COMMUNICATION PROGRAM (FHCP)
- USDA's MANAGEMENT CONTROL PROGRAM
- OMB CIRCULAR A-132, FEDERAL PRODUCTIVITY AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT IN SERVICE DELIVERY:
  - DR 1132-1, Productivity Improvement Program (PIP)
  - Total Quality Management (TQM)

## CHARTER

### CONSOLIDATED ASSISTANCE, REVIEW & EVALUATION (CARE) PROGRAM

#### I. PURPOSE

The primary goal of the CARE Program is to concentrate on assisting those reviewed to understand what can be done to improve their operations and how to actually make the necessary changes to improve. While accomplishing this objective, CARE Teams will perform a limited review of administrative and financial activities in accordance with requirements of the Federal Managers Federal Integrity Act and Departmental Regulation No. 21000-001.

The CARE Program includes the review of all operational/management activities of an organizational unit through a consolidated approach that will provide sufficient assurance about the effectiveness and efficiency of administrative and financial management activities performed.

The CARE Program will meet the minimum assurance requirements of OMB Circular A-123 (Internal Control Systems), A-127 (Financial Management Systems), A-130 (Management of Federal Information Resources), and applicable Executive Orders. These Circulars and Executive Orders and other Federal regulations provide the policies and guidance Federal employees are to follow in successfully performing their duties.

The objectives of the CARE Program will be to:

- Assist, in a helpful and proactive way, those being reviewed to understand what can be done to improve their operations.
- Help those being reviewed to interpret and understand current policy and procedure guidance.
- Identify gaps in available guidance/policy/procedures that require attention in order to meet the needs of Location activities.
- Promote efficiency, economy and responsiveness to program needs through the identification of trends and the sharing of ideas and techniques for improving administrative processes.
- Assure compliance with Federal policies and regulations by officially designated employees.

## II. COORDINATION AND INTERACTION

The Deputy Administrator, Administrative and Financial Management (AFM) will provide leadership in coordinating the CARE Program. The DAAFM Management Analyst will serve as the CARE Coordinator.

The Deputy Administrator, AFM, and the CARE Coordinator will interact with the AFM Divisions, Area Directors (ADs), Area Administrative Officers (AAOs), and Location managers through meetings, reports, and requests.

The CARE Coordinator will report any material weaknesses as defined in OMB Circular A-123, to the appropriate AFM Division and ARS Management Control Official located in FMD.

## III. MEMBERSHIP

Members of the CARE Team will be selected from Area and Location level administrative offices, and branches of the AFM Divisions. Individuals selected will be those who have successfully demonstrated the knowledge, skills and abilities required to be a member of the CARE Program. These qualities include: aptitude and willingness to learn outside of one's functional expertise; demonstrated teamwork and communication skills; objectivity; and adaptability to a dynamic environment. CARE Team members serve for three-year terms, resulting in one-third of the CARE Program membership changing annually.

Each CARE Team typically consists of eight members and is organized as follows:

- Two Location Administrative Officers/Technicians.
- Four functional experts, chosen from the following areas of expertise:
  - \$ Information Technology
  - \$ Human Resources
  - \$ Facilities (Safety and Health)
  - \$ A New Initiative - a functional expert who can provide assistance regarding a new system or initiative within the Agency. For example, in FY 2002 and FY 2003, this would be an FFIS expert.
- Two additional members, chosen from the following groups:
  - \$ Location Administrative Officers/Technicians
  - \$ Research Leader Secretaries
  - \$ Extramural Agreements functional experts
  - \$ Budget and Fiscal functional experts

## \$ Procurement and Property functional experts

The goal of CARE Team composition is to achieve as much balance between Headquarters, Area and Location representation as possible without compromising functional specialties or the issues and needs of the Locations being reviewed. In addition, the CARE Coordinator reserves the right to increase or decrease the size of the CARE Team sent to a particular Location, depending on the size and geographic dispersment of the Location, and the identified issues to be resolved at the Location.

### IV. RESPONSIBILITIES

Deputy Administrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide leadership in coordinating the CARE Program.</li><li>• Provide resources in the form of a Program Coordinator and clerical support.</li></ul>
CARE Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Establish CARE Program Management Plan and Schedule.</li><li>• Coordinate and interact with Area/Location.</li><li>• Program Managers, DAAFM, AFM Divisions, Area Directors, and Area Administrative Officers.</li><li>• Evaluate and select CARE Team members.</li><li>• Recommend and select CARE Team leaders.</li><li>• Provide leadership and guidance to the CARE Teams through:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Team building</li><li>- Objective/goal setting</li><li>- Established review procedures</li><li>- Resource allocation</li><li>- Consolidation of findings.</li></ul></li><li>• Report accomplishments/findings/and trends to the DAAFM, ADs, AFM Divisions and AAOs.</li><li>• Keep AFM Division Directors and AAOs informed on progress.</li><li>• Report limited reviews assurances to FMD and responsible AFM Division.</li><li>• Represent the CARE Program at conferences and meetings.</li></ul>
AFM Division Directors/AAOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Nominate CARE Team members.</li><li>• Provide functional expertise to CARE Teams.</li><li>• Provide reference material (regulations, policy, procedures, etc.).</li><li>• Incorporate changes in P&amp;P's consistent with</li></ul>

As of 02/27/2003

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>findings regarding gaps.</li> <li>• Provide assistance to resolve issues identified in CARE reports.</li> </ul>
AAOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop consolidated Action Plan to address report findings.</li> <li>• Follow-up on report findings to ensure that action items are resolved.</li> </ul>
CARE Team Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide on- site leadership to review team members.</li> <li>• Lead opening and exit review conferences.</li> <li>• Consolidate review findings and report accomplishments/findings to the CARE Coordinator.</li> </ul>
CARE Team Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actively participate in CARE Team meetings.</li> <li>• When selected, actively participate in on-site reviews.</li> <li>• Willingly share techniques, processes, and ideas on accomplishing quality administrative support.</li> <li>• Actively recognize and document best practices for improving administrative processes.</li> <li>• Provide advice and assistance to those reviewed.</li> <li>• Suggest changes to processes that will improve the quality of administrative support.</li> <li>• Draft appropriate sections of the report.</li> </ul>

## V. REVIEWS

Reviews will be scheduled every year. Each review will be performed by a group of members selected from the CARE Team resource pool. No member of a CARE Team shall be from the Area in which the Location for review is located. CARE Teams will be led by a member of the resource pool.

A report of the findings/recommendations will be completed and submitted to the AAO and Location management through the DAAFM within 6 weeks of the on-site review.

## VI. RESOURCES

The AFM Divisions and Area Administrative Offices shall provide travel and support services for their respective representatives.

Travel expenses for Location representatives and the cost of meeting facilities will be from funds made available by the DAAFM

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James H. Bradley  
Deputy Administrator, AFM

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Date

# CONSOLIDATED ASSISTANCE, REVIEW, AND EVALUATION PROGRAM

## CARE Organization FY2003

Executive Oversight  
James H. Bradley

Administrative Support ——— CARE Coordinator ——— ARS - MCO  
Teresa Brown Stephen Schaefer R. D. Garlitz, FMD  
Management Analyst

CARE Review Teams

Team #1	Team #2	Team #3	Team #4	Team #5	Team #6
Leader	Leader	Leader	Leader	Leader	Leader
Co-Leader	Co-Leader	Co-Leader	Co-Leader	Co-Leader	Co-Leader
Members	Members	Members	Members	Members	Members

As of 02/27/2003

## REVIEW PROCESS

### 1. PRE-REVIEW ACTIVITIES

Review Team Selection: The CARE Management Team pool consists of employees from all levels of the AFM organization who represent all disciplines involved in administrative operations/management. This pool consists of review teams equally representing all levels and disciplines. The review team selected to review sites within an Area will consist of Area and Location members from Areas other than the one selected for review. The CARE Management Team will select sites for review on a cyclical basis and review teams for each cycle.

CARE Management Team Site Scheduling: Based on Area and AFM Division input on recommended sites or DAAFM directed sites, the CARE Management Team will establish a schedule for review of a selected number of sites within each Area. Sites where the LAO/T has been in place for less than one year are usually not reviewed, but may be reviewed in certain circumstances. The ultimate goal of the CARE Program is to review all ARS sites approximately every 8 years.

Review Site Characteristics: The characteristics of the review site will be identified. Identification of these characteristics can be made through review of the ARMPS input for the current year; reports from the procurement reporting system, NFC-CAS, previous reviews/audits, real and personal property, and interest penalty; knowledge of the CARE Management Team; and, through contacts with AAO's or AFM Divisions. A generic characteristics package will be prepared (see Part II, A) to facilitate the actual review.

Coordinate Review Dates/Scheduling Letter: At least 4 weeks prior to the planned start of the review, a scheduling letter (see Part II, B) will be sent to the Location management, with copies to AFM Divisions, AAO's, Area Directors, and ARS Management Control Officer. The Team Leader's Checklist (Attachment III-A) will assist Team Leaders with assuring that all pre-review procedures have been accomplished.

### 2. PREPARATION FOR CARE REVIEW

Site Characteristics: The CARE Coordinator will develop a characteristics package for each Location to be reviewed. This package will include:

- Summary characteristics cover sheet (see Attachment I-A)
- Current year ARMPS Summary reports for the Location
- Current year position staffing plans
- Prior FY Procurement Report
- Real and Personal Property Report

- Any previous (last 3 years) review/audit reports
- Prior FY Interest Penalty Report
- AFM Functional Questions
- Functional comment sheets from Area and AFM Divisions

Scheduling Letter: The CARE Review Team Leader will contact Location Coordinator and Location Administrative Officer/Technician to issue a joint scheduling letter announcing the CARE Program intent, planned Location review dates, and selected Review Team. A copy of the CARE Charter and Personnel Interview Questionnaire (see Attachments II-D) will be sent with the letter for distribution at the Location. At a minimum it is suggested that the Personnel Interview Questionnaires be distributed to the LC and LC Secretary, RL's and their Secretaries and all Location administrative support personnel. This questionnaire is used to form the basis of the interview discussions, but is not intended to limit areas of discussion.

A copy of the scheduling letter will be sent to the Area Director, Area Administrative Officer, and AFM Division Directors. The scheduling letter will be formatted according to Attachment I-B.

#### Telephone Contacts:

The Area Administrative Officer and the CARE Review Team Leader will personally contact the Location Coordinator and the Location Administrative Officer/Technician to discuss the review and any areas of emphasis the Location personnel would like the review team to assist them with.

### 3. REVIEW PROCEDURES

Introductions/Opening Conference: The CARE Review Team Leader will introduce the Review Team Members to the Location Support Staff (LSS). After the introduction to the LSS, the Team Leader and Co-Leader will meet with the Location Coordinator and the LAO/T to discuss the goals of the program. An opening conference will be scheduled for the LC, RL's, and their Secretaries, Location Administrative Officer/Technician and staff, and other Location personnel. The opening conference has a dual purpose: 1) to introduce the CARE Program and Review Team members to Location personnel; and 2) to get an understanding of the Location characteristics along with any areas the Location wants addressed. The Review Team Leader should take the lead by introducing the team members and providing a brief introduction of the CARE Program. The team should solicit concerns the Location wants addressed. The agenda should be reviewed with notations of any needed changes. A sample Opening Conference Notes (Attachment II-E) will assist Team Leaders with the opening conference.

Tour of Facilities: A one to two hour tour of the facilities should be conducted to offer the CARE Team a glimpse of the research conducted at the Location and to become familiar with the facilities at the Location.

Interviews/Reviews: The CARE Review should be a combination of interviews and document reviews. Keep in mind the main goals of the CARE Management Team. The AFM functional questions should be answered to the maximum extent possible. Actual review of functions should incorporate the guidelines contained in the USDA Procurement Management Review Handbook; ARS' Mutual Assistance Review Guide for the Financial Management Program; Area developed guides; and the CARE Manual.

Interviews of individuals shall be conducted to determine customer expectations and to bring to light concerns regarding administrative processes. These interviews should include the LC and Secretary; RL's and their Secretaries; and the administrative support personnel. Interviews should take place before functional reviews are performed.

Attachment II-D, Location Personnel Interview Questionnaire, is to be used for interviewing both Program and Administrative personnel.

Documentation: All activities of the Review Team shall be documented. To the degree possible, all functional questions must be answered either through interviews or review of files and documentation should be coded according to the AFM Functional Codes (Attachment II-A). Functions/processes not clearly falling within a code should be noted for later addition to the coding. As interviews are conducted, clear and concise notes should be made on the interview sheets by one of the interviewers and coded appropriately (normally two CARE members conduct interview--one to ask questions, one to record responses). As review of files is conducted, clear notes on findings should be recorded either in the functional code section of the manual or on paper by code. The CARE Team Leader is responsible for assuring that documentation is copied and provided to each member of the team so they can assess any issues, concerns, or exemplary practices during the review and also to write their section of the review closeout and report.

Assessment: The Review Team should set aside a portion of time to meet, discuss findings, and consolidate documentation. Questionable areas should be verified. The team should outline the "Exit Conference" presentation. Special attention should be given to positive findings. Any follow-up guidance/help/assistance should be noted. Major non-conformance which will be referred for action should be noted.

Management Briefing: The Team Leader will provide the opportunity for a separate discussion with the Location Coordinator and LAO/T prior to the Exit Conference to discuss the review. During the review, the Team Leader will also provide a briefing to the

AAO and CARE Coordinator.

Exit Conference: An Exit Conference will be scheduled for the Location Coordinator, RL's and their Secretaries; LAO/T and staff; and, other Location personnel. The Review Team Leader should solicit comments on the team's activities, compliment commendable Location activities, offer assistance/advice, and cover noted concerns about areas that could be improved. Sample Closing Conference Notes (Attachment II-E) will assist Team Leaders with the exit conference. All significant findings (No Assurance, Assurance with Exception, Commendation, and Assistance Provided) must be documented and a written copy provided to the Location prior to Team departure.

#### 4. DOCUMENTATION OF CARE REVIEWS/TRACKING AND REPORTING

Tracking and Reporting of CARE activities will support the management controls consolidated under the CARE Program. Reports generated will provide supplemental information to support ARS Internal Management, USDA Management Control Program, USDA Consolidated Review Program, and the USDA Productivity Improvement Program (TQM). To the degree possible, relational database programs will be used to track and record CARE findings, recommendations, and follow-up actions taken.

CARE Review Report: At the completion of reviews at a Location a consolidated report utilizing the format in Attachment II-B will be developed and signed by the Review Team Leader, reviewed and signed by the CARE Coordinator and Deputy Administrator AFM, and distributed electronically within 6 weeks to:

- S Deputy Administrator
- S AFM Division Directors
- S Area Administrative Officer
- S Location Coordinator
- S Location Administrative Officer/Technician
- S CARE Review Team members
- S ARS Management Control Officer

Assurance Statements: At the completion of reviews at a Location, an Assurance Statement for each AFM Main Functional Code utilizing the format in Attachment II-C will be developed and signed by the Review Team Leader, reviewed and signed by the CARE Coordinator and Deputy Administrator for Administrative and Financial Management, and electronically distributed to:

- Affected AFM Division Director
- ARS Management Control Officer

Report Recommendations: After the CARE Review report is finalized and signed, the CARE Coordinator will abstract resulting recommendations and transmit these to the affected ARS Management Official at the Location, Area, or Headquarters. Recommendations to external organizations (i.e., NFC, GSA, OO, etc.) will be developed by the CARE Coordinator after consultation with affected ARS Management Officials and transmitted via the DAAFM. An annual report of recommendations made and actions taken will be provided to the ARS Management Control Officer.

Tracking Locations Reviewed: A relational database has been established to identify all ARS Locations and indicate those reviewed by a CARE Review Team and dates of the reviews. This tracking will be aimed at assuring that all ARS Locations are reviewed at least every 8 years. ARS Locations will be those identified in the Human Resource Division's annual update of ARS Research Locations.

Tracking Recommendations: The tracking of actions against recommendations has been established to identify the AFM function, affected Location, functional measurement, recommendation and actions. The CARE Coordinator will be responsible for tracking recommendations and exceptions and reporting open items to the Deputy Administrator, AFM Division Directors, and Area Administrative Officers until all items have been reported or corrected. CARE Trend Analysis Reports will be developed for each Fiscal Year.

AFM Functions Reviewed: A method for tracking those AFM functions reviewed at Locations has been established. As a minimum this tracking will include the AFM function, Location reviewed, dates reviewed and functional measurement.

## REFERENCES

- ARS Field Acquisition Technical Manual
- ARS Research Leaders Handbook
- NFC External Procedures Manual
- The ARS Resource Management System (ARMS) Manual
- The Automated Annual Resource Management Plan System (ARMPS) Users' Manual
- LAO Personnel Desk Reference Manual
- ARS Facilities Construction Manual
- SAMS Manual
- LOTS Manual
- PC-TARE Manual
- How to Develop Quality Measures that Are Useful in Day-to-Day Management
- USDA Consolidated Review Program Guide
- OMB Circular A-123
- USDA Procurement Management Review Handbook
- ARS Mutual Assistance Review Guide for the Financial Management Program
- ARS Guidelines for Imprest Fund Verifiers (Manual 303.4A)
- ARS Guidelines for Imprest Fund Auditors (Manual 303.4B)
- ARS Property Manual
- ARS Extramural Agreements Manual
- ARS Safety Manual 230.0

## **VI. ATTACHMENTS**

# **Attachment I-A - CARE Review Characteristics Package**

Location				
Mode Code:	LC:	Phone:		
	AO/AT	Phone:		
Name & Address:				
Work Sites:				
Research Disciplines:				
AFM Pilot Initiatives				
Responsible AFM Division:		Initiative and Responsible Contact:		
Acquisition				
Delegated Authority Level:		Individual (s)	Amount	
Imprest Fund				
__ Yes __ No    Amount:				
Cashier: Subcashier:		Alternate: Verifier:		
Miscellaneous Payments				
Unit Certifying Officer (s):				
Real Property				
ARS Owned: Building __ Land	GSA Leased: Building __ Space	Commercial/ Private Lease: Building __ Space __ Land	University Furnished: Building __ Space __ Land	Are Government Quarters Provided: Yes No
Information Technology				
Initiatives or Issues:				

Personal Property	
No. Accountable Officers:	Motor Vehicle Fleet: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Exchange/Sales Accounts: No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Animal: <input type="checkbox"/> Crops: <input type="checkbox"/> Other:
Safety and Health	
Collateral Duty Officer:	Phone:
RSS <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No      Individual:	Pesticide Applicator License: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No      Individuals:
	Bureau Drugs Narcotics: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No      Individuals:
Extramural Agreements	
Initiatives:	
Human Resources	
Bargaining Unit: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Agreement in Place: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes (attached) <input type="checkbox"/> No
No. T&A Contacts:	Delegated L/A Authority <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Civil Rights	
Initiatives:	
EEO Advisory Committee <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Special Emphasis Committee <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Other:	Student Programs: 1890 National Scholars <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Summer Intern Program <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Research Apprentice Prog. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No HACU <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Enclosures	
ARMPS Printout Location Executive Summary Location PSP Area Administrative Office PSP State of the Location State of Location Management Units Acquisition/Assistance Plans (550's)	Procurement Report Review/Audit Report      I Interest Penalty Report Functional Comment Sheet RATS Location Printout EEO/CR Statistical Data Information Systems Security Plan Others

## **Attachment I-B - Sample Scheduling Letter**

Date

SUBJECT: CARE Review - (Location)

TO: (Name)  
Research Leader/Location Coordinator  
(Location)

(Name)  
Location Administrative Officer  
(Location)

FROM: (Name)  
CARE Team Leader

ARS Administrative and Financial Management has implemented the Consolidated Assistance, Review, and Evaluation (CARE) Program aimed at assisting ARS Locations in the true spirit of the President's Management Agenda.

I will lead the CARE Review Team at (Location). After (X) years with ARS, I find CARE to be one of the most innovative programs of its type. It constitutes a golden opportunity to address: how the customer and providers of administrative services interact; what the delivery of services is; and what the delivery of services should be.

As discussed in our telephone conversation, your Location has been selected for review during the week of (month, days, year).

The Review Team consists of several highly recognized Location, Area, and Headquarters personnel (see Enclosure #1). A proposed agenda for the Review Team is also enclosed (see Enclosure #2) and a detailed interview schedule will be coordinated with the Location prior to the Team's arrival.

Enclosed for your information and distribution are the CARE Charter (Enclosure #3) and the Personnel Interview Questionnaire (Enclosure #4). As part of the Review process, we plan to interview you, secretaries, lead scientists, and the administrative support staff. Sharing the questionnaire will give interviewees an opportunity to consider their responses in advance. We request that private rooms be made available for interviews of employees not housed in individual offices.

Documentation for the CARE Review Team's activities will be developed during the Review. This documentation will be finalized shortly after completion of the Review, and will be shared with you generally 6 weeks after the Review is completed. In addition, I will provide both of you with personal briefings, followed by an Exit Conference to brief all Program and Administrative personnel of the Team's observations,

*As of 02/27/2003*

(Name, et al)

recommendations, and follow-up actions. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. I can be reached via e-mail at (email address) or by telephone on (phone #). We look forward to visiting the (Location), and appreciate your support of the CARE Program. Through our combined efforts, we can add to the quality of administrative services while enhancing ARS=program delivery.

Enclosures

cc:

Area Director w/o encl.

Area Administrative Officer w/o encl.

CARE Coordinator w/o encl.

Division Directors w/o encl.

CARE Team Members w/o encl.

# CARE Review Proposed Agenda

Date:

Time:

The CARE Team arrives at the Location and members are introduced to the Location Administrative staff. The Team Leader and Co-Leader meet with the Location Coordinator and the Administrative Officer together or separately. We will discuss the review and determine if there are any specific administrative functions/concerns you want addressed or additional individuals you want us to see.

Date: (Monday morning)

Time:

## Opening Conference

(We look forward to meeting with the Location Coordinator, Research Leaders, Secretaries, the Administrative Officer and Administrative staff, and encourage all employees, including the Union Steward (if applicable) to attend.

Date: (Monday morning)

Time:

## Tour of Facilities

Date: (Monday afternoon)

Time:

## Interviews and Review

Date: (Tuesday & Wednesday)

Time:

## Interviews and Review

Date: (Thursday)

Time:

## Interviews and Review finished and function write-ups prepared

Date: (Friday morning)

Time:

## Team Leader and Co-Leader brief Location Coordinator& Administrative Officer

Date: (Friday morning)

Time:

## Exit Conference

As of 02/27/2003

# **Attachment I-C - CARE Standard Operating Procedures**

# SUGGESTED REVIEW APPROACH

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## TEAM STRUCTURE

A CARE Review Team will consist of four to ten members and will include a Leader and Co-Leader. Team members should include: at least two Location Administrative Officers/Technicians (LAO/T's); functional experts in Facilities, Human Resources, Information Technology, and New Initiatives (e.g. FFIS); and two additional members chosen from budget and finance representatives from the Area (ABFO) or Financial Management Division (FMD), acquisition and assistance representative from the Area, Procurement & Property Division (PPD), or Facilities Division (FD), Research Leader Secretaries, and a mixture of experienced and new members.

## MEMBER ASSIGNMENTS

To the degree possible, team members should be paired for purposes of interviews and functional reviews. This pairing should be based on AFM Functions and, generally, the LAO/T's should be paired with an Area or AFM Division representative. This functional pairing will depend on the expertise of the individuals making up the team and the characteristics of the Location being reviewed. Interviews should be performed by pairs, and the Team Leader and Co-Leader should interview the Location Administrative Officer/Technician (LAO/T) and the Location Coordinator (LC). The LC will be a Research Leader (RL), a Laboratory Director, (LD), or a Center Director (CD), depending on the Location's organization structure.

While all Team members will be evaluating and collecting information on all AFM functions during interviews and reviews, individuals or pairs should be assigned main responsibilities for each of the seven main AFM functions (EAD, FD, FMD, HRD, ITD, & PPD) and Civil Rights.

One Team member should be assigned the responsibility for recording comments made at the Opening and Exit Conferences.

## **STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS AND REVIEW**

---

For best results, a Location review should be built on the following progressive steps. Using these progressive steps allows the team to: capture a total picture of the AFM management/operations; point out overall or specific concerns for AFM functions that can be addressed while at the Location; and provide documentation for the report and assurance statement.

1. Location Support Staff (LSS) and CARE Team Introductions
2. Team Leader and Co-Leader meet with LC and LAO/T
3. Opening Conference
4. Tour of Facilities
5. Team meeting
6. Personal interviews
7. Team meeting to share impressions/findings
8. LSS functional interviews
9. Functional documents/systems review
10. Team meeting to share impressions/findings
11. Follow-up with the Program personnel or LSS on functions
12. Team meeting to consolidate impressions/findings and prepare for Exit Conference
13. Briefing of LC and LAO/T
14. Briefing CARE Coordinator
15. Briefing of AAO (as soon as possible during review)
16. Exit Conference
17. Report

The sequencing of steps 3, 4, and 5 are left to the Team Leader's discretion and the individual needs of the Location being reviewed.

# SOP FOR TEAM MEMBERS

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## **PURPOSE**

Based on the listed progressive steps and the tools developed (questionnaires, functional listing, functional questions, and summary sheets), the following standard operating procedures should be applied:

---

## **Tour of the Facilities**

1. During the "walk through" tour each member should maintain notes on observations, impressions and findings.
  2. Following completion of the tour each member should share these observations, impressions and findings.
  3. All documentation sheets should be given to the Team Leader.
- 

## **Opening Conference**

1. Introduction of team members
  2. Intent of CARE
  3. Question and answer session
- 

## **Program Personnel Interviews**

1. Using the Personnel Interview Questionnaire (which was sent to the Location prior to the review) as a guide, team members should interview personnel and note responses against each question on a copy of the questionnaire.
2. Following the interviews, each member should ensure the information collected is clear, concise and is numbered based on the functional codes.
3. After all interviews are complete, the team should meet to share findings.
4. Interview sheets should be completed and given to the Team Leader who will ensure that copies are given to each Team member.
5. Follow-up of identified concerns relating to specific functions should be addressed by the individual(s) assigned that function during interviews of the LSS and/or review of the documents or systems.

---

**LSS Personnel Interviews**

1. Using the Personnel Interview Questionnaire (which was sent to the Location prior to the review) as a guide, team members should interview individuals and note responses against each question.
  2. In addition, information collected during these interviews should be noted (where applicable) against functional codes.
- 

**Functional Reviews**

1. Using the AFM Functional codes, individuals should review functional processes, documentation and/or systems.
  2. Summary of findings or information collected should be used to answer functional codes.
  3. The functional code section of the CARE manual (or notes on paper by functional code) should be used to record specific findings.
  4. After preliminary interviews and review of functions the team should meet to share findings, discuss concerns and seek clarification of issues. Team Leaders will conduct conversations with Area personnel, and/or the CARE Coordinator, if the need arises.
- 

**Follow-up (Program Personnel, LSS or Functions)**

1. After clarification of issues, or obtaining information for assistance or help, members should follow-up on specific functions or with Program or LSS personnel.
2. Any assistance provided or information promised should be recorded on summary sheets.
3. After follow-up the review team should meet to discuss overall findings, draft functional statements (each individual, or pair, should prepare a short draft of findings for each section of the assigned function), and discuss presentations at the Exit Conference.
4. At this time all original documentation should be given to the Team Leader. Copies will be given to each Team member to be used in writing closeout significant findings for their section of the report.

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**Briefings**

1. The Team Leader and Co-Leader should first brief the LC and the LAO/T on findings and proposed Exit Conference presentations.
  2. The LC, LAO/T, Team Leader and Co-Leader should reach agreement on issues, or at least recognize differences.
- 

**Exit Conference**

This meeting sets the stage for the formal review report and, as a minimum, should cover the following:

1. Positive findings
  2. Written Summary of functional Significant Findings
  3. Recommendations/Suggestions
  4. Assistance provided by team members
  5. Unique processes or techniques learned/commendation of Best Practices
  6. Appreciation for the Location participation in the CARE Program
  7. Question and Answer session
- 

**Evaluation Forms**

The Team Leader should customize the following forms:

1. Location Evaluation of CARE Team
2. CARE Team Self-Evaluation

Form #1 should be provided to Location personnel for completion and returned to CARE Coordinator via the LAO. Form #2 should be provided to CARE team members and returned individually to the CARE Coordinator.

## **AO/CARE Coordinator Briefing**

The Team Leader should coordinate with AAO prior to the review to decide when AAO would like to be briefed (either onsite during/after the review or immediately upon the Team Leader's return to his/her duty station after the review). NOTE: AAO should always be consulted during the review if any sensitive issues should arise.

The Team Leader should consult with CARE Coordinator throughout the Review as needed and should provide a briefing on the specifics of review immediately after briefing the AAO.

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## **Report**

Based on notes from the Opening and Exit Conferences, documentation and individual member follow-up/input, the Team Leader shall prepare a draft report using the word processing template provided by the CARE Coordinator.

1. The Team Leader shall prepare the Assurance Statement and refer the report and statement to team members for review and comment.
  2. After review and comment the Team Leader shall finalize the report and statement and refer them to the CARE Coordinator for final signatures and distribution. This report, along with the documentation and the Location Packet, shall be retained by the Team Leader until notified by the CARE Coordinator that the action plan developed for the Location has been completed and the report is closed by the Deputy Administrator, Administrative and Financial Management.
-

## **DO'S WHILE CONDUCTING REVIEWS**

Do remember to wear your CARE lanyard and a smile.

Do remember the primary function of CARE is to assist Locations in a helpful and pro-active way.

Do remember that conversations with individuals are confidential and that names will not be used in reporting findings.

Do remember that you are a visitor in another Area and as such you may encounter different policies and procedures that **MUST** be taken into consideration.

Do remember that if you encounter a difficult situation, it should be immediately brought to the Team Leader's attention and not discussed outside the Team.

Do reference regulations in report in situations of "Assurance with Exception" or "No Assurance"

Do remember to check with the Team Leader or functional specialist on Team if not absolutely certain of your facts **BEFORE** discussing policies and procedures during a review.

Do remember that you are on-site for only a week and you won't always get all the facts correct. Throughout the review and closeout, issues should be discussed with the LAO/T and LC. Their comments regarding issues should be taken into consideration.

## **DON=TS WHILE CONDUCTING REVIEWS**

Don't get involved in Employee Relations/EEO issues. If a situation arises, you need to let the individual know that dealing with these issues is not a function of CARE and that if they proceed, the matter will have to be brought to the attention of upper level management.

Don't try to push your "better way of doing things" on the Location. What doesn't work for your Location may very well be working fine at this site.

Don't get overly involved with Location personnel in "after-hour" activities since team findings are usually discussed during these times.

## **PROCESS FOR ASSIGNING ASSURANCE WITH EXCEPTION OR NO ASSURANCE**

### **Assurance With Exception**

1. Identify trend
2. Discuss within Team
3. Be able to cite specific issue, number of occurrences (or percentage) and Policy and Procedure, regulation, etc., that has been violated. Team should also be able to cite correct procedure (final report should contain a recommendation on how to correct situation).
4. Upon Team agreement, it can be indicated to the Location that an Assurance with Exception will probably be cited in the final report, unless additional data is produced that refutes the finding.

### **No Assurance**

1. Identify trend. Seriousness of situation (intent for waste, fraud, or abuse) will dictate difference between Assurance With Exception and No Assurance.
2. Discuss within Team.
3. Be able to cite specific issue, number of occurrences (or percentage) and Directive, regulation, policy, etc., that has been violated. Team must have thorough documentation of situation and assure that there was an intent to circumvent regulations.
4. Discuss with CARE Coordinator prior to citing No Assurance.
5. Discuss situation with Area Administrative Officer/Location Management. Location/Area must be made aware of the No Assurance call prior to the Team leaving the Location and clearly understand what the issue is and how it should be corrected.

# **Attachment II-A - AFM Functional Codes/Questions**

CARE FUNCTIONAL REVIEW

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT - GENERAL

CARE FUNCTIONAL REVIEW

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT - GENERAL

**1.01 Location Administrative and Financial Management**

Provide a summary of how administrative processes in general are functioning.

How do the administrative and program personnel interact? Are monthly staff meetings conducted? If so, are they beneficial?

Is the Location doing any “best practices” that can be captured and shared with other Locations?

**1.02 Area Administrative and Financial Management**

Provide a summary of the level of interaction between the Area and the Location.

**1.03 Headquarters Administrative and Financial Management**

Describe the interaction between the Location and Headquarters.

If the Location deals with specific Divisions, state relationship and description of service provided.

**1.04 Other**

Describe any other processes that do not fit into the above-mentioned categories (i.e., program process issues)

CARE FUNCTIONAL REVIEW  
ACQUISITION OF SUPPLIES, SERVICES, AND EQUIPMENT

For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Linda Wilson on 301-504-1733.

## **2. Acquisition**

Select 10 percent of orders from the purchase order log book for review. Look carefully at orders placed during the last two weeks of the fiscal year, and at orders over \$2,500.

### **2.01 Requisitions**

Reference Field Acquisition Manual (FAM, 213.2M, updated 2002), and FAR Part 13, REE Purchase Card Program Manual 213.3M, Departmental Regulation 5013-6, APC/LAPC Purchase Card Program Guide.

AD-700 Procurement Request: Ensure the file includes an AD-700 Procurement Request complete with required sub-account, specifications, funding, estimates, justifications, and approval.

Verify that the AD-700 is signed by an authorized individual. Verify that the AD-700 is properly dated.

Verify that a tracking system is in place to handle the administration of procurement requests, contracts, purchase orders, assignments of requests for action. An example would be to have a manual or automated log. Verify that an action is traceable through the system. Is there a management information system in place to report on status of sensitive actions?

If the AD-700 has been entered in FFIS for commitment accounting, the FFIS RQ print screen must be with the AD-700.

NOTE: If the requisitioning office has entered the AD-700 into FFIS and a RQ is present, funds have been committed in FFIS for this purchase. If the procurement official purchases the requested items by purchase card, the requisitioning office must be notified that the purchase was completed by purchase card. Failure to do so will cause a double obligation of funds in FFIS, the first by the AD-700 entry the second by PCMS. When the requisitioning office is notified of the card purchase, they must then back-out the AD-700 amount from FFIS. This information should be documented and kept in the purchase file.

### **2.02 Procurement**

Verify that current P&P's, Bulletins, etc. are readily available.

Document the kind of random review and supervision of the purchasing function at the Location to insure efficiency and compliance with regulations. What is the Area's involvement in this regard?

#### **2.02-1.01 Blanket Purchase Agreements (BPA's)**

Ensure that BPA's are replaced by using the purchase card when appropriate.

Ensure that BPA's are documented on an AD-838 Type 45 and contain all the necessary terms and conditions, including individuals authorized to place orders and extent of their authority, and securing maximum discounts. (FAM 213.2M, 2002) and FAR Part 13.303).

Ensure BPA orders are only used by those individuals authorized on the agreement (FAR Part 13.303).

Check to see that whenever possible, contractors invoice monthly rather than invoicing for each call order (FAR Part 13.303 and FAM). This is to reduce paperwork and cost to the Government.

Ensure BPA's are reviewed annually to reaffirm the need and proper usage (FAM 213.2M, 2002 and FAR Part 13.303).

Ensure that call orders over \$2,500 are documented to show that competition was obtained or notation for sole-source (FAR Part 13.303 and FAM).

Ensure that individual call orders do not exceed the maximum call order limit (FAM 213.2M, 2002 and FAR Part 13.303).

Ensure that BPA's do not exceed the total dollar limitation or its stated time period.

#### **2.02-1.02 Purchase/Delivery Orders**

Check log books for orders just under \$100,000 representing split requirements that were broken down into several purchases merely to permit the use of simplified acquisition procedures. Look for open market purchase orders that exceed the \$100,000.

Check log books for multiple orders to same vendor/merchant broken down to remain under warrant authority.

Check purchase orders for best value and/or price reasonableness determinations.

Ensure there is an awareness of the procedures for ratification of unauthorized obligations (P&P 212.16).

Ensure that the total value of the order is within the delegated authority of the contracting officer.

Check to see if the purchasing agents are using required sources properly, particularly, FPI (UNICOR) and Javits-Wagner-O'Day (JWOD) Act program sources (FAR Part 8 and FAM).

Check to see if procurement outreach efforts are being accomplished. Is there an awareness of the procurement preference program in terms of need to locate small business, small disadvantaged business, women-owned business, etc. (FAR Part 19, DR5090-2, DR5090-3).

Ensure that Small Business - Small Purchase Set-Aside regulations are adhered to: Purchases over \$2,500 must be set-aside for small businesses. The file should be documented as stated in FAR 19.506(c) should dissolution of the set-aside be necessary. Note: Orders under \$2,500 (micro purchases) do not have to be set aside for participation by small business.

Check log book for multiple orders less than \$25,000 that may have been broken down into several purchases merely to circumvent synopsis requirements.

Ensure that Comp Demo Program regulations are adhered to: Requirements such as construction and refuse services under \$25,000 should be acquired according to the Small Business Competitive Demonstration Act.

Verify that all Open-Market requirements of \$25,000 or greater were synopsized.(FAR Parts 5 and 13 and FAM).

Ensure that competition is obtained for requirements over \$2,500. If not, the file should document why competition was not feasible or not obtained. For non-competitive purchases exceeding \$2,500, ensure price reasonableness is included in the file (FAR Part 13 and FAM).

Services over \$2,500: If subject to the Service Contract Act, wage rates should be obtained on the SF-98 and incorporated in the order (FAR Part 13 and FAM).

Actions over \$25,000 or under Comp Demo Program: Verify that an SF-279 was prepared in accordance with FPDS procedures and in the specified time frame for actions defined in the FPDS Reporting Manual. Note: SF-279 also is required for construction over \$500. Verify 281 code A22" is used on purchase orders to ensure action is not counted twice.

Construction over \$2,000: Ensure Davis-Bacon Wage Rates are incorporated in the order (FAR Part 22 and FAM).

Ensure that there is no violation of the restrictions against advisory and assistance services (FAR 37.2).

Request for quotes: The file should be documented to show the method of solicitation, either orally or in writing. Written competition is required for construction over \$2,000 (FAR Part 13 and FAM).

Ensure that source lists are maintained and used to select sources for simplified acquisitions. This includes GSA (FAR Part 8, FAR 13 and FAM).

Defaults - In case of Termination for Default, did the office charge the excess costs of any repurchase action to the defaulted contractor?

Ceiling price: Are ceilings established for all estimated orders?

Delivery date: Does the order contain a definitive or determinable date for delivery of supplies or performance of services.

Are AD-838's, Purchase Orders, prepared in accordance with the instructions on IRS Form 1099 reporting requirements (NFC Manual Title II, Chapter 5, Section).

Check to see if procurement files are well maintained and organized. All pertinent data should be kept in the contracting officer's file.

FFIS print screen of the VEND Table Record for the vendor's remittance address must be in the file with the purchase order.

Ensure that as stated in FAR Part 4.805, the location retains records as follows: 1) Construction contracts over \$2,000 and all other contracts over \$25,000 for 6 years and 3 months after final payment; 2) Signed construction contract of \$2,000 or less and all other contract of \$25,000 or less 3 years after final payment; 3) Records pertaining to contracts using

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simplified acquisition procedures 1 year. after final payment. Refer to Part 4 for detailed info.

### **2.02-1.03 Purchase Cards**

Qualification and Training of LAPC- Verify that the LAPC is in the 1102 or 1105 series. For those not in the 1102 or 1105 series, check to see what procurement training have they received to qualify them as a Level 1C Contracting Officer. This does not mean that the LAPC has to be warranted (APC/LAPC Program Guide and Departmental Regulation 5001-1).

Reference Tools - Check to see what tools the LAPC is using to manage and provide oversight of the purchase card program ( i.e., Discoverer, PCMS, PCMS Newsletters, etc).

Reports - Check to see if LAPC has submitted any Monthly Reports on Purchase Card/Check Use and Reconciliation to the Area.

Management and Oversight - Check to see if the LAPC is performing any reviews of cardholder transactions for compliance with existing procurement policies, i.e., random review of cardholder transactions.

Ensure that cardholder keeps a log for recording purchase card transactions (REE Purchase Card Program Manual 213.3M).

Disputes - Ensure the cardholder maintains a separate file of disputed purchase card transactions with required documents to ensure credits are received in a timely manner and to ensure items are credited appropriately when resolved. (REE Purchase Card Manual 213.3M)

### **2.02-1.04 Training**

Verify warrants are posted (FAR Part 1.602-1).

Verify training plans are in place to maintain and enhance purchasing/contracting skills (FAR Part 1.603 and DR5001-1).

### **2.02-1.05 Federal Supply Schedule (FSS)**

Ensure that delivery orders used to purchase from the FSS have (per FAR Part 13 and FAM):

- The "Delivery Order" block checked on the AD-838.
- The special item number shown for each item.

Ensure there is a SF-279 in the file for delivery orders, and delivery order modifications, over \$25,000 (FAR Part 13 and FAM).

## **2.03 Administration**

### **2.03-1 Simplified Acquisitions**

Ensure there is an effective tracking system and procedure for determining contract and order completion and final payment for closeout purposes.

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Scope of Order: If a modification increased the supplies or services ordered, it should be within the scope of the original order. If not, it should be justified as a "new procurement" action (FAR Part 13 and FAM).

Supplemental agreement: Ensure that if a modification increased the total over \$100,000 and it was by supplemental agreement, it incorporated the mandatory contract clauses.

### **2.03-2 Receiving Reports**

Receiving reports over \$1,000 must be signed and dated and promptly released to NFC (FAM 213.2 and NFC Policy and Procedures for Purchase Orders, Title II, Chapter 5, NFC Manual).

### **2.03-3 Invoice/Payments/Closeout**

Check for record of invoice/payment in the file. Check for final payment. (FAR 4.804-3)

Check for closeout in file. (FAR 4.804-5)

## **PERSONAL PROPERTY**

For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section please contact Cheryl Brumback on 202-270-2359.

### **2.04 Personal Property**

#### **2.04-1 Organizational Structure**

Determine who has delegated authority as the property management officer (PMO) and if the Area PMO provides operational support for property functions. :

Identify how many designated Accountable Property Officers (APO's) are at the Location.

Determine how the PMO ensures that new APO's are aware of their duties and responsibilities as outlined in REE Manual 221.1M, Personal Property, Motor Vehicle, & Aircraft Management, dated 8/3/99. (See Section 2, Property Management Authority, subsection "Accountable Property

##### **2.04-1.01 Training**

Verify that the Location personnel involved with property have the proper support and training to perform property management functions. Confirm whether the property management staff has received any specific property management training. If not, determine whether training or additional support is needed to perform responsibilities.

##### **2.04-1.02 Reference Material**

Ensure that the Location's property management staff has the latest versions of the following Personal Property references:

- REE Manual 221.1M, Personal Property, Motor Vehicle, & Aircraft Management (dated 8/3/99).
- NFC Procedures Manual Personal Property System (PROP) (March 1998)

## **2.04-2 Property Inventory, Accountability and Control**

Review APO files and inventory records to ensure that the Location performs physical inventories every 2 years and whenever there is a change in APO's according to REE Manual 221.1M. Check to ensure that the files contain a copy of a current reconciled inventory with all the proper signatures for APO's. (See Section 4, Physical Inventories and Agriculture Property Management Regulations, AGPMR 104-51.106. PROP28 report in PMIS/PROP will list APO name, address, and latest inventory dates to help CARE Team confirm current/delinquent inventories)

Determine who performs the physical inventory and certifies its accuracy and reconciles the official property records.

Verify whether the APO receives a copy of the reconciled inventory as stated in REE Manual 221.1M, Section 4, Physical Inventories, subsection "Reconciling Physical Inventories".

Explain any problems that occur when conducting and completing physical inventories.

Confirm that appropriate managers are authorizing property passes (i.e., memoranda, form AD-873, OF-7, Property Pass, form AD-107, etc.) for employees who need to remove Government property from the Location.

Determine how the Location ensures departing employees return Government property.

### **2.04-2.01 Property Receipt and Identification**

Explain how the Location receives and updates accountable property. Review property files to ensure that files contain signed property receipt documents, including serial numbers and bar code/NFC-ID numbers. (See REE Manual 221.1M. (See Section 3, Accountability and Control, subsection "Receipt Documents for Accountable Property".)

### **2.04-2.02 Personal Property Records Maintenance**

Verify APO files to ensure that transaction documents contain required signatures for acquisitions, transfers, and disposals. (REE Manual 221.1M.)

Verify that the Location receives monthly suspense reports from the Area and how they are reconciled. Ensure that the Location/Area reconciles all items to within 60 days of receipt. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 5, Suspense Listings, and PPD Policy Memorandum, Reconciling Area Suspense Reports, dated 3/9/00.)

### **2.04-2.03 Security**

Verify whether the Location has any firearms, ensuring firearms are properly secured, bar coded, and included on the Location's official inventory. (According to REE Manual 221.1M, Section 2, Accountability and Control, subsection "Sensitive Property", all firearms are considered sensitive and are accountable property).

### **2.04-2.04 Reporting Property Theft, Loss, or Damage**

Determine if the Location has experienced any property theft, loss, or damage. Ensure incidents are documented, including statements from the custodian, supervisor, APO and appropriate law enforcement (for thefts). Confirm that documents contain appropriate signatures from the APO and property management officer, and any accountable property

records are removed from PMIS/PROP. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 9, Reporting Lost, Stolen, or Damaged Property.)

#### **2.04-4 Approval Clearance**

Confirm that the Location follows the limitations and restrictions regarding acquiring specific items such as executive office furniture, furnishings, etc., according to Federal Property Management Regulation, FPMR 101.25-104.

#### **2.04-5 Property Exchange**

Determine whether the Location evaluates property that is no longer needed for possible reassignment or exchange potential.

Ensure that the Location follows exchange sale procedures when determining potential for exchange sale, including the list of ineligible categories of property, items must be similar (in the same Federal Supply Classification Group), and the one for one rule is applied. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 13, Exchange/Sale of Property and FPMR 101-46.202 for prohibited list.)

Confirm that the Location documents the trade-in/exchange process, ensure files include form AD-700, Procurement Request, or form AD-838, Purchase Order, with descriptive information (serial number/bar code, if accountable) and trade-in amount and form AD-107, Report of Transfer or Other Disposition or Construction of Property, to specify suspense accounting, transaction amount, and document receipt of the item. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 13, Exchange/Sale of Property.)

Ensure transactions are accurately completed in PROP when exchange involves accountable property.

Explain any problems that have occurred with the exchange/sale process.

##### **2.04-5.01 Acceptance of Gifts**

Determine whether the Location has accepted any gifts and who has the authority to accept Gifts on behalf of ARS. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 18, Acceptance of Gifts, subsection “ARS Field”.)

Confirm that the Location ensures the Gift meets the restrictions for acceptance and documents receipt. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 18, Acceptance of Gifts, subsection “Unconditional Gifts”.)

#### **2.04-6 Excess Property**

Since excess property is the first source of supply, confirm the process the Location uses to determine whether excess property is available before new acquisitions.

Determine what methods are available to the Location to view available excess property.

Explain the procedures the Location uses when reporting excess property. What type of documentation is required (memorandum, forms SF-120 or AD-107)? Review files to ensure documentation contains the APO’s signature and excess condition code.

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Review files to ensure that the Location reports and documents the disposal of non-accountable property.

Ensure that the Location is aware of the length time for each reporting cycle pending final disposal instruction or sale. (The required screening time frames are 30 day departmental screening for reportable property or 15 day screening for non-reportable property, 21 day Federal utilization screening, 21 day Federal donation screening, and sales cycle of approximately 60-90 days, however, there is no specified limit for sales). (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 10, Reporting Excess Property. These time frames are revised per FPMR 104-43.7001.)

Explain how excess property is identified and labeled. Who maintains accountability and control of excess property pending disposal? If the Location maintains a storage facility for excess, are items labeled? (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 10, Reporting Excess Property, subsection "Procedures".)

Explain circumstances when the Location or Area determines that local disposal instructions (via abandonment/destruction) are in the best interest of the Government due to continued cost, care, handling, security, etc. Review files to ensure documentation (AD-112's) contains appropriate signatures. Confirm that no employees take any property that has been put into the abandonment and destruction category.

Review files for documentation that excess property that has passed through the reporting cycle and is eligible for donation in lieu of abandonment and destruction is only donated to eligible recipients. (Government property may only be donated to "Public Bodies" which basically are organizations that receive State or Local funding, and not necessarily non profit organizations.) (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 16, Abandonment and Destruction, subsection "Donation to Public Bodies" and FPMR 101.44.701.1)

Determine whether the Location has procedures in place to clear hazardous materials from excess property before disposal.

Review files to confirm that the Location posts the "Public Notice of Abandonment or Destruction" when disposing of excess items with an acquisition cost of \$500 or more. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 16, Abandonment and Destruction, subsection "Public Notice" and FPMR 101-45.902-1.)

#### **2.04-6.01 Transfers under Specific USDA Donation Programs**

Verify that the Location follows procedures when transferring excess property under the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Act and Executive Order 12999. Review files to ensure property is reported excess in PMIS for possible re-use with USDA, form SF-122 contains appropriate signatures, and completed transfers are reported to APMO for inclusion in annual reports. (Refer to REE Manual 221.1M, Section 17, USDA Donation Programs. Also refer to PPD Policy Memorandum 104-01 dated 5/14/99, donation agreements are no longer required.)

Determine whether the Location has transferred excess property to 1890 Land Grant Institutions, ensuring files contain appropriate documentation with signatures from appropriate property officers.

#### **2.04-7 Agency Administered Sales**

Verify that files contain appropriate documentation of sale, including form OF-15, Sale of Government Property, and form OF-16, Sales Slip. Ensure proceeds are deposited into the appropriate suspense account fund if sale is exchange sale

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property. If the sale is not from exchange/sale property, are funds deposited to U.S. Department of Treasury as miscellaneous receipts?

Ensure that the Location does not sell property to employees who are or were accountable for the property, used the property, or connected with its declaration as excess or sale. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 14, Agency Administered Sales, subsection "Exemptions" and AGPMR 104-45.302)

Explain any problems that occur when conducting agency administered sales.

#### **2.04-8 Motor Vehicles**

Confirm that the Location is aware of the Area's limits on passenger vehicles (sedans/station wagons) and that any additions to their fleet are properly justified.

Ensure that the Location acquires vehicles that meet the Federal fuel average fleet economy standard, meet replacement standards, and are the minimum size necessary to accomplish the mission. Ensure justifications are included when ordering vehicles other than standard vehicles. (This may be accomplished at the Area level. However, Locations are responsible for requesting replacement vehicles according to requirements listed in REE Manual 221.1M, Section 19, Motor Vehicle Management, subsection "Replacement Standards" and FPMR 101-38.4.)

Verify whether the Location has purchased any alternative fueled vehicles (AFV's). If not, determine if the Location has explored the availability of AFV's. (See PPD Policy Memorandum 221.1-02, Purchasing Alternative Fueled Vehicles, dated 2/11/00. Depending on the county and zip code, some Locations are required to submit justification for non-AFV purchases.

Explain any problems that occur when acquiring new/replacement vehicles.

Ensure the Location's vehicles contain Government tags, decal AD-792, Vehicle Marking, decal AD-185, Decal for Official Use, form ARS-715, Operational/Maintenance Record or other method for recording and tracking vehicle operational data and form AD-651, Accident Reporting Kit. The Location should receive these items from Area before receipt of the vehicle.

Ensure that the Location maintains motor vehicle dispatch record/log that provides reasonable audit trails to verify official use. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 22, Use of Government Vehicles, subsection "Supervisory Responsibilities" and AGPMR 104-38.301(c)(3).

Ensure that the Location secures motor vehicle keys and fleet cards when they are not in use.

Explain any problems that the Location has had with the Government fleet card.

Verify that the Location's vehicles are mechanically inspected according to State/Local requirements. If there are no State or Local requirements, the Location should follow the manufacturer's recommendations.

Ensure that the Location performs annual visual safety inspections of vehicles and that any repairs or problems noted are promptly corrected. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 23, Vehicle Operations, subsection "Visual Safety Inspections".)

Ensure that the Location tracks and documents quarterly operational and maintenance information in PROP or forwards to the Area for input. (This only includes transactions that occur using any other method other than the Voyager Government fleet card. The Voyager Fleet Card automatically captures this data through PCMS-fleet and feeds the data to PMIS/PROP System. This also includes Government fuel and maintenance from on-sight facilities. See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 23, Vehicle Operations, subsection “Reporting Operational/Maintenance Data”.)

Verify whether the Location has employees that use Government vehicles for home to work transportation. Verify whether the employee is authorized for home to work transportation because of fieldwork and that the employee is in an authorized job series designated for fieldwork. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 22, Use of Government Vehicles, subsection “Home to Work Transportation”, and Department Regulation 5400-5, Use of Government Vehicle for Home-to-Work Transportation, Appendix A, for the list of authorized job series.)

Explain circumstances for allowing home to work transportation for employee outside the authorized job series. Ensure the Location receives Departmental approval for any other occurrence. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 22, Use of Government Vehicles, subsection “Home to Work Transportation”.)

Employees who are on “official travel status” and are entitled to per diem and use the Government vehicle in lieu of short-term rental, may be authorized for temporary overnight home to work because they must arrive/depart at an unusually early or late time frame. However, this is determined on a case-by-case basis. (See REE Manual 221.1M, Section 22, Use of Government Vehicle, subsection “Temporary Home to Work Transportation While on Travel Status.” Vehicle operation covered under Federal Travel Regulations.

CARE FUNCTIONAL REVIEW  
FACILITIES MANAGEMENT, CONSTRUCTION, REAL PROPERTY  
AND SAFETY, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Rommy Ignacio on 301-504-1191

**3.00-1 Repair and Maintenance**

Determine if the Location annually earmarks at least 4 percent of its base funds to accomplish routine repair and maintenance (R&M) needs or has received a waiver in accordance with Agency policy. (ARMS Manual, ARS Manual 245.1, Chapter IX).

Verify that there is regular maintenance procedures in place. Are buildings and ancillary equipment inspected on a regular basis? Ensure that the Location is consulting with the Area Engineer for identifying/prioritizing repair and maintenance needs/projects.

Check to see if multi-year facility planning is in place. Ensure the Location's Facility Plan contained in the ARMP correlates with the annually updated ARS Facility Plan.

**3.00-2 Energy Management**

Determine if the Location is integrating energy conservation into its regular operations and maintenance activities per ARS Energy Management Plan (P&P 134.2).

When was the last energy audit performed? Have recommended energy conservation projects been implemented or included in the ARS Facility Plan? Does the ARS Facility Plan include future energy audits? Were energy projects recommended by the audits implemented?

Ensure that Location maintains consumption records/monitors energy consumption patterns so that any possible irregularities in utilities billing or estimating procedures can be identified quickly.

**3.00-3 Facility Accessibility**

Ensure Location facilities meet the needs of individuals with physical disabilities. Have professional surveys been done to assess physical accessibility needs to conform with the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS) or the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG)? Does the Location have copies of the UFAS or ADAAG?

Is there an accessible route from the public way to building entrances?

Are there marked parking spaces and entrances for disabled individuals?

Are there accessible paths of travel to primary workstation, conference/training room, all purpose (gathering) areas?

Are there accessible elevators to all floors of facility?

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Is there one accessible rest room, on each floor of facility, with proper door width; toilet stall; sink basin; path of travel?

Are there accessible water fountains?

**3.01 Architect-Engineering (A-E) Contracts** - For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Regina Herchak on 301-504-1179

**3.01-1 A-E Contracts**

Determine if the Location has A-E authority? If so, what is the threshold?

Determine if the Location obtains A-E Services. If they do, how do they acquire them?

Determine if the Location has any concerns with A-E services provided under Area/Headquarters contracts.

**3.02 Construction Contracts**

Determine if the Location has construction authority. What is the threshold?

Determine if site visits and pre-bid conferences are conducted as described in FAR 14.207. Are uniform agendas utilized? Are the events of these meetings documented?

Determine if large projects are being split to keep them within the Location's authority.

Determine if the Contracting Officer has delegated any authority or responsibility to personnel at the job site. If so, was a formal letter(s) of delegation as Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) or Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR) issued that clearly describes the authorities, responsibilities, and limitations in accordance with FAR Part 42.202?

Are Davis-Bacon Act (DBA) requirements being monitored in accordance with FAR 22.4? For example, Posting of Wage determinations (FAR 22.404-10) and Submission and Review of Weekly Payroll Records (FAR 22.406-7), etc.

Determine how payments are made under construction contracts. Are payments made monthly based on a percentage of completion, lump sum, etc

Determine if change orders or contract modifications were executed. Were these actions documented for the file as follows:

- What was the contractual authority for the change (changes, differing site conditions, suspension of work, etc.)?
- Were these actions pre-priced or based on actual costs?
- Was the price determined fair and reasonable (FAR 13.106-3) (FAR 31.201-3)?

Determine if contract performance periods are appropriately monitored. If completion date passes, is some action taken to reestablish the completion date?

Are inspections conducted in accordance with FAR 46-312 and 46.1? If so, are files documented to show the results of the final inspection?

Are contracts closed out properly (FAR 4.804)?

Are formal written Notices to Proceed (NTP) issued to the contractor to establish the official commencement date of performance? Does the contractor sign it? Is a signed copy of the NTP maintained in the contract/purchase order file?

Are significant discussions and/or issues documented and copies maintained in the contract/purchase order file?

Is the Form ARS-371, Construction Progress and Payment Schedule, (or something similar) being used for individual projects involving multiple disciplines (HVAC, plumbing, electrical, etc.), larger dollar value projects, or lengthy projects? If so, is it being reviewed by the COR and approved by the CO; and is it also being used as a means of verifying contractor invoices?

**3.03 Facility Security** - For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Terry Rupe on 301-504-1228.

Reference P&P 240.3

Ensure the Location has an Occupant Emergency Program (OEP) established and that each employee has a copy. The program should cover processes to be followed during emergencies, such as fire, explosions, bomb threats and natural disasters.

Ensure the Location is conducting physical security surveys.

Ensure the Location is reviewing its security operation and administrative procedures.

Ensure that there is some type of fire protection/prevention system (alarms, sprinklers) in place (ARS Manual 230).

Ensure that the Location is conducting annual "Emergency Disaster Drills" (ARS Manual 230)

### **3.03-1 Workplace Violence**

Did the Location receive the orange "workplace violence handbook"?

Is there a plan in place to respond to workplace violence? Do managers/employees know what to do in the event of a violent situation?

Are employees aware of the Secretary's policy on the prevention of Workplace Violence?

### **3.04 Real Property**

#### **3.04-1 Lease Agreements -Land and Space**

Reference Real Property Manual 245.1, Chapters I and VIII.

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Ensure the Location has access to a copy of the Real Property Manual 245.1. If not, the Area can be contacted if assistance is needed.

Ensure that the LAO/T has a copy of any space or land lease, MOU, or supplemental agreement pertaining to the construction/placement of any ARS-owned buildings at the Location, so that the LAO/T is aware of the requirements and restrictions of those documents.

Ensure that the LAO/T is aware that ARS may not erect buildings or other structures on non-Federal lands, without obtaining the right to use the land (a lease) for the estimated life of or need for the improvement. (7 CFR '2250a)

Determine whether the Location made any capital improvements to space not covered by a lease. Since they are not permitted, if any occurred, please so indicate.

Ensure the Location is aware that Departmental Regulation 1620-2 establishes USDA policy on acquisition, management and disposition of office and related space for USDA owned, leased and GSA-controlled space, and that all USDA agencies must comply with this regulation. The Real Property Management Branch has under its direction a small group of space and building management specialists.

### **3.04-2 Government Quarters Rentals**

Reference, Real Property Manual 245.1, Chapter V

If the Location has quarters, is the LAO/T aware of the responsibilities regarding quarters management? (P&P 245.2)

Ensure there is support documentation on file to demonstrate that Government living quarters (quarters) for ARS employees are properly managed and accounted for. Items on file could include:

- documentation of Consumer Price Index (CPI) adjustments
- documentation for Condition of Employment (COE), if there are any COE employees (must be renewed every 5 years)
- a copy of the most recent appraisal of the quarters, kept at the Location (note the date)

Ensure that Form ARS-494, Form ARS-4, Certificate of Acceptance, and/or equivalent QMIS documents are on file at the Location, signed by the Real Estate Warrant Officer (REWO) and the employee who is renting the government quarters.

Ensure there are periodic inspections & physical inventories being made of the quarters.

Review records of the rental receipts account to ensure its use is only for the maintenance and operations of the quarters.

### **3.04-3 Acquisition**

Reference Real Property Manual 245.1, Chapter VI

Does the Location have an understanding of Agency policy regarding the acquisition of land and buildings, as well as non-ARS construction on ARS-owned property? (No acquisition shall be made unless provision is made in the applicable appropriation or other law.)

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#### **3.04-4 Utilization**

Reference Real Property Manual 245.1, Chapter IX

Ensure that land and facilities are utilized in accordance with Agency policy.

How is the Location conducting its biannual inspection of real property holdings, to ensure the effective use of the property, in support of mission-related activities?

Ensure that the Accountable Property Officer maintains the following documents in accordance with his/her responsibilities:

- real property records to reflect custodial responsibility for the real property assigned to the Location;
- physical inventories and any recommendations for adjustments to the official real property records;
- ensure prevention of encroachments onto ARS lands;
- ensure construction projects are within legal limitations;
- complete and forward to the REWO: Form AD-107, "Report of Transfer or Other Disposition or Construction of Property;" Form AD-112, "Report of Unserviceable, Lost, Stolen, Damaged or Destroyed Property;" and Standard Form 118's, "Report of Excess Real Property."

#### **3.04-5 Disposition**

Reference Real Property Manual 245.1, Chapter II

Ensure the Location is aware that during the APMO's compiling of excess real property package, the Location will be responsible for "physical protection and maintenance cost" for protecting and maintaining the property while going through excess/surplus/disposal. Has this cost been developed for recent excess projects?

Verify that SF-118's, Form AD-112, and Form AD-107 are used for all disposal actions, including disposal of ARS-owned buildings with a value of \$15,000 or less. Is the Location sending copies of the forms to the Area Office? (P&P 246.1-ARS)

#### **3.04-6 Easements/Revocable Permits**

Reference Real Property Manual 245.1, Chapters III & IV

Verify that easements and revocable permits are in place as required, and that they are periodically reviewed and have not expired.

Ensure that Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (governed by regulations found in 36 CFR Part 800) is being addressed in all revocable permits and easements, when applicable.

Ensure that a revocable permit is used for (issued to) all entities utilizing ARS-owned space at the Location.

Ensure that the LAO/T carefully evaluates requests for the placement of commercial antennas on Federal property, in accordance with GSA Bulletin FPMR D-242, dated 6-11-97, and GSA Bulletin FPMR D-246, dated 2-25-98. Requests of

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this nature require the issuance of a revocable permit, not an easement.

Ensure the LAO/T is familiar with the new ARS Bulletin 99-250, 'Collection and Use Fees for Revocable Permits and

When screening requests for easements, is the Location ensuring that:

- the request is a case of necessity,
- the amount of land requested does not exceed what is required for the purposes of the requested easement,
- the ARS property is not encumbered by other rights which would be incompatible with the proposed use,
- the proposed use would not conflict with current or projected ARS programs,
- the affected ARS property is not on the National Register of Historic Places, and
- the proposed action would not produce an environmental effect.

### **3.04-7 Property Management**

Ensure that the Location is aware that compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (governed by regulations found in 36 CFR Part 800) should be addressed in all design and study phases of R&M, modernization, and new construction projects, as well as building demolition, when applicable.

Ensure that proper authorization for the construction of buildings/facilities on ARS-owned land by non-Federal entities was granted prior to initiation of the design. In some cases, approval by Congress may be required.

### **3.05-1 Safety, Health, and Environmental Management**

For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Pete Jovanovich on 301-504-1243.

Ensure Locations have a written plan for Safety, Health, and Environmental Management (SHEM), which includes radiation, biological, and pesticide safety as applicable. The plan should include a policy statement and annual program goals and objectives for eliminating and/or minimizing losses as a result of accidents/incidents involving or producing injury, illness, and property/environmental damage in the ARS workplace. (ARS Manual 230, Chapters 9, 25, 26, and 30)

Ensure funding for safety, health, and environmental requirements are listed in the ARMPS. Costs for safety, health, and environmental requirements in excess of \$25,000 should be listed in the Procurement Plan of the ARMPS. Costs for safety, health, and environmental requirements less than \$25,000 may appear elsewhere in the ARMPS at the direction of the Area office. If the Location is using Hazardous Waste Cleanup funds, those funds should be listed in the HWC HPRL section of the ARMPS. (ARMPS Manual/Guidance and ARS P&P 230.1, Tracking Hazardous Waste Cleanup Funds)

Ensure applicable safety, health, and environmental laws, regulations, codes and guidance are present in a centralized location available for reference by all employees at all times. Access through the Internet is acceptable if employees are provided with website addresses, a knowledge and/or training on how to use this source, and access to an on-line computer at all times. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 8)

Ensure required SHEM related materials (i.e., Poster AD-1010, USDA Safety and Health poster; OSHA Form 200, Log and Summary of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses; CA-10, What a Federal Employee Should Do When Injured at

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Work; and local requirements) are posted on a bulletin board(s) in a conspicuous location(s). (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 16)

Ensure safety, health, and environmental requirements are taken into consideration during the design and construction process. Location and/or Area SHEM personnel must review designs to ensure they meet SHEM requirements. (ARS P&P 242.2, Facilities Construction)

Ensure that Locations have assigned personnel to manage and implement the SHEM program. At a minimum, each Location must have an assigned Collateral Duty Safety Officer. Locations with 15 or more full time employees must have a safety committee. The safety committee should be representative of the Location's employees. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 17 and 29 CFR 1960, Occupational Safety and Health Programs for Federal Employees).

### **3.05-2 Safety, Health and Environmental Education/Training**

Ensure appropriate personnel have viewed each of the six safety, health, and environmental management training videos as applicable. Is the training of the CDSO and Safety Committee listed in the Training Database?

Ensure safety, health, and environmental orientation sessions are conducted and documented for new or transferred employees. (ARS Manual 230, Chapters 13, 25, 26, 28 and 29).

Ensure all completed safety, health, and environmental training is documented. Documentation should be in a centralized location.

Determine if the Location has an Incentive Awards Program for recognizing SHEM performance. While not required, many Locations use such methods to encourage participation in SHEM programs. (ARS Manual 230, Section A, Chapter 14)

### **3.05-3 Safety Management**

Ensure the Location has standard operating procedures in place and implemented for high-risk operations. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 26)

Ensure the Location provides written notification of potentially hazardous conditions to employees. Management must inform employees about any workplace hazards. (ARS Manual 230, Chapters 25)

Ensure that the Location has a comprehensive Inspection/Abatement Program using ARS Form 404, or similar method. Inspections must be conducted annually by Area or Location safety personnel (ASHMs, CEPs, CDSOs, and/or Safety Committee members). If a Union is present, ensure a representative has the opportunity to participate in the inspection. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 21)

Ensure annual inspection reports and abatement activity documentation is present in a centralized location available for reference by all employees. Inspection reports must be kept on file for five years. Deficiency/abatement notices generated during the inspection must be posted near the hazard until it is corrected. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 21).

Ensure the Location has an Accident/Incident Investigation and Reporting Program in place. The Location must have a file for accident reports and the ensuing investigations. Check for OSHA 301 incident reports and CA-1 forms.

#### **3.05-4 Industrial Hygiene**

If chemical, biological, or radiological agents are used, ensure the Location has a written Hazard Communication Program. Employees must also receive Hazard Communication Program training. (ARS Manual 230, Chapters 13 and 25)

Ensure the Location has an industrial hygiene program to recognize hazards in the workplace.

Ensure the Location maintains an inventory of chemical, biological, or radiological agents, and that the inventory is updated at least annually. The inventory must indicate if the material is hazardous or nonhazardous and be available to employees. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 25)

Ensure all hazardous areas and areas containing hazardous materials (i.e. chemical, biological, and radiological agents) are clearly posted and secured. (ARS Manual 230, Chapters 25 and 29)

Ensure that Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) are retained and that they are orderly and easily assessable to employees who need them. MSDS are required for all materials that may be harmful to humans such as laboratory chemicals, pesticides, insecticides, cleaning agents, biological agents, radiological agents, etc. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 25)

Ensure applicable Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is available and its use mandated. Each employees immediate supervisor is responsible for:

- assessing the need for PPE;
- providing appropriate PPE to employees;
- developing standard operating procedures for PPE;
- training employees on proper use and care;
- ensuring that employees utilize the equipment (ARS Manual 230, Chapters 21 and 30)

Ensure Location personnel are qualified in first aid and are available on all shifts.

#### **3.05-5 Environmental Management**

Ensure the Location considers safety, health, and the environment in its procurement practices. Specifically, the Location should review AD-700's for hazardous substances to determine if:

- materials are already in stock and available
- a less hazardous substance can be substituted
- minimal quantities are being ordered (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 52 and Executive Order 13148)

Ensure the Location has records of hazardous waste determinations for generated wastes and waste analysis on file for unknown wastes. In order to properly document waste disposal, records of waste determinations should be on file for each type of hazardous waste generated. (ARS Manual 230, Chapter 45)

Ensure the Location maintains records on the quantity and types of hazardous waste generated each month. The Location must utilize this information to determine and document their generator classification (i.e. conditionally exempt small quantity, small quantity, and large quantity).

Ensure the Location has filed EPA Form 8700-12, "Notification of Hazardous Waste Activity", with the EPA or State, if applicable. The EPA does not require conditionally exempt small generators to file, however, the State may require the Location to file. (ARS Manual 230, Chapters 40, 46 and 49, CFR 261.5 and 262.12)

Ensure the Location has written hazardous waste management procedures. This includes procedures for the accumulation of hazardous wastes and the management, handling, and removal of containers. (ARS Manual 230, Chapters 46 and 49)

Determine if the Location maintains a log of hazardous wastes inspections. Weekly inspections of hazardous waste storage areas must be conducted for large quantity generators. Small quantity and conditionally exempt small quantity generators are not required to perform such inspections but are encouraged to do so. (ARS Manual 230, Chapters 46 and 49)

Ensure Hazardous Waste Manifests are on file and orderly (a returned signed copy from the disposal or treatment facility receiving the waste is required). Locations that utilize University resources to dispose of waste are responsible for documenting only the types and quantities of waste (copies of manifests are not required). (ARS Manual 230, Chapters 46 and 49)

## CARE FUNCTIONAL REVIEW HUMAN RESOURCES

For information on interpretation or clarification of the functional questions, please contact the person whose name and phone number is shown next to each section.

**4.01 Employment** - For information on questions in this section, please contact Sue Hamilton on 301-504-1398.

Verify the Location's procedures for receipt of applications. All applications should be either date-stamped or the date of receipt of the application should be notated in ink.

Applications for permanent employment (competitive service): These applications must either be forwarded immediately to the servicing Branch, HRD, for response or the Location must return the application by letter informing the applicant to apply for permanent positions in response to specific vacancy announcements. These vacancies are advertised on the OPM and HRD websites. Verify that the Location does not retain any applications for permanent employment

Applications for L/A and Student Positions (excepted service positions): If the LAO has delegated employment authority, applications for L/A and student positions (nonpermanent positions in the excepted service) may be circulated. Verify that the Location does not keep applications on file and gives "veterans preference," if applicable, to applicants.

Applications for Postdoctoral positions (excepted service positions): may be submitted to the scientist who is the mentor for the position and may be retained until a selection is made. Verify that the Location gives "veterans preference," if applicable, to applicants.

Verify that the Location obtains proof of enrollment in school on a full- time or part- time basis from employees on student appointments.

This can be done by requesting a copy of transcripts once or twice per year, or by requesting verification of enrollment through the registrar's office. Note: If a student stops going to school at least on a half-time basis as defined by the institution, the Location should initiate an SF 52 to terminate the appointment. Reference P&P 413.8, Student & Volunteer Programs.

If volunteers are used at the Location, verify they have signed agreements, which are on file and records of service are being maintained. This includes documentation of days and number of hours worked. [Reference P&P 413.8, Student & Volunteer Programs.]

Verify HRD has approved the content of employment ads (paid and free) for recruitment. [Purchase order files should contain the necessary approvals. Reference PPD Memorandum, Approval of Paid Advertisements, dated June 8, 1995.]

Note: Paid ads must be reviewed by the servicing HR specialist to ensure USDA and ARS are featured prominently as the employer; the correct salary range is listed; the type of appointment is shown, and the EEO/CR statement is included.

Verify employee paper records are safeguarded in locked file cabinets with restricted access. Records should contain only current documents necessary to the function of the office.

Note: there should be no attempt to duplicate an Official Personnel Folder. No information other than "public information" (i.e., Name, Title, Pay Plan, Series, Grade, Pay Rate and Duty Location) may be released without the

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employee's consent. (Reference P&P 158.1, Freedom of Information Act and Privacy Act Guidelines and P&P 411.7, Releasing Information About REE Employees.)

Verify the Location understands when an SF-52 should be prepared, i.e., name changes, position redescrptions, reassignment of employees to another management unit, etc.? Verify details of employees (those who are detailed to other positions for more than 30 days) are being documented with an SF-52. Reference HRD website, Preparing Requests for Personnel Actions.

**4.02 Time and Attendance** - For information on questions in this section, please contact Ted Nykiel on 301-504-4426

Verify all employees (with the exception of intermittent who should not have a regular work schedule) have an established tour of duty approved by the supervisor.

Note: [The tour of duty (for full time employees) should constitute 80 hours per pay period scheduled in advance with the work schedule approved by the supervisor on ARS-331 (part time employees would schedule and work the designated number of hours less than 80). Reference P&P 402.1, Flexible Work Schedules.] Work Schedule needs to be shown in time frames (e.g., 8:00 – 4:30) not just the number of worked in a given day.

Verify with timekeepers and supervisors that changes in types of employment/change in work schedules from/to full time, part time or intermittent are not changed on the T&A until a personnel action (initiated by an SF-52) has been approved and processed by HRD.

Verify employees and timekeepers are initialing, and that supervisors are signing each T&A.

Note: The ARS-331 is the source document for the T&A, therefore, all time in pay and non-pay status should be consistent on both documents. [Reference NFC Procedures: Title I, Payroll/Personnel Manual, Chapter 7, Time and Attendance Procedures, Section 1, Time and Attendance Instructions, dated 3/97 and P&P 402.1, Flexible Work Schedules, dated September 16, 1997.]

Verify all credit and/or compensatory time is being recorded on T&A's. Credit hours are initiated by the employee versus compensatory time, which is ordered/required by the supervisor. Compensatory time cannot be forced on an employee earning less than GS-10, step 10. These employees, however, may decide to accept compensatory time in lieu of overtime. If so, the statement on the bottom of the time sheet should be initialed by both the employee and the supervisor.

Verify that credit hours accrued (especially on Saturdays and Sundays) were worked on the employee's own initiative. If the work was assigned/ordered/directed/etc., by management, the hours worked must be recorded as overtime or compensatory time, not credit hours. See bullet item above.

Review backup documents for T&A's such as ARS-331, Military or Court orders, Medical Certificates, and approvals to work overtime or earn compensatory time. Military and Court leave should only be used if documented with specific orders. Medical Certificates may be required if sick leave used exceeds 3 days or if otherwise required by the supervisor. Reference P&P 402.6, Leave.

Review T&A information for leave used under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and the Sick Leave Usage for Family Care, Adoption and Bereavement as follows:

FMLA is an entitlement to up to 12 weeks of Leave Without Pay (LWOP) (annual and/or sick leave may be substituted as appropriate) during any 12 month period to care for a family member. LWOP is coded as Transaction Code (TC) 71 for processing and all time must be maintained in a cumulative manual record.

Sick leave provision allows employees to use up to 480 hours of sick leave for serious medical (prorated for part time employees) each leave year as long as the employee maintains a sick leave balance of at least 80 hours for care of a family member or for bereavement. An employee can use up to 40 hours of sick leave for this same purpose without having to maintain a balance of 80 hours. TC 62 (sick leave used) with the prefix 62 Sick Leave for Family Care is used for time and attendance processing. A maximum of 104 hours of family sick leave can be used for non-serious medical situations. The total amount of family sick leave, both serious, and non-serious combined, cannot exceed 480 hours in a leave year.

Verify in the T&A records for callback overtime work situations.

If an employee is called back to work unexpectedly for additional duty later in the workday or on a day that was not originally scheduled as a workday, overtime is credited for a minimum of 2 hours -- whether 1 minute or 2 hours is actually worked. After the first 2 hours the individual would earn overtime as it was actually worked. [Reference P&P 402.3, Premium Pay.]

In the event of an on-the-job injury or job-related illness, verify the timekeeper understands how to code the T&A. The day of the injury is coded TC-66. Work days missed after that would be coded TC-67 while the OWCP case is being processed. Also, determine if Worker's Compensation claims forms are available. Verify procedures to submit claims forms were followed. [Forms are on the web [www.dol.gov/dol/esa/owcp.htm](http://www.dol.gov/dol/esa/owcp.htm). Reference 20 CFR, Part 10, and 5 USC, Chapter 81.]

Check to see if any employees are listed on the NFC TIME 4004 Report CULPRT 0152 or the Leave Error Report. If so, verify an AD-717, Leave Audit, has been completed to resolve the leave error. Review leave reconciliation/audits.

Note: Leave reconciliation/audits must be conducted in three situations:

1. When an employee has a discrepancy in leave balances between the NFC database and the STAR Database information;
2. When an employee is an approved recipient of the Leave Transfer Program;
3. When an employee separates/retires from the Agency and there is a discrepancy as stated above.

All leave audits must be prepared from ARS 331's -- not from the system printouts. To certify correctness of an audit, the ORIGINAL SIGNATURE of the audited employee's supervisor along with DATE is required on all audits (AD-717). The Supervisor's signature on the leave audit certifies correctness of the audit consistent with their personal knowledge. Leave audits should also indicate the name of the audit preparer (normally the timekeeper) and her/his phone number. An accurate leave audit includes explanatory notes as necessary. Leave audits should be completed by the end of the next pay period for reported leave imbalances, as listed on the TIME 4004 Report. An open leave audit should be ongoing for any employee who is an approved recipient in the Leave Transfer Program. A leave audit should be conducted at the end of the same pay period of the separation/retirement.

Verify certified T&A reports and the supporting documentation are being retained for 6 years. [Reference NFC Procedures: Title I, Payroll/Personnel Manual, Chapter 7, Time and Attendance Procedures, Section 1, Time and Attendance Instructions, dated 3/97.]

**4.03 Pay and Leave** - For information on questions in this section, please contact Denise Corbitt on 301-504-1443.

Review the use of overtime, compensatory time in lieu of paid overtime, and credit hours. Verify that the overtime and compensatory time in lieu of paid overtime have been approved in advance.

Note: Verify that credit hours earned have been approved by the established Location procedure and the approving person had the authority to approve the extra hours of work.

Verify that employees and supervisors understand the differences between overtime, compensatory time in lieu of paid overtime, and credit time as follows:

Overtime worked and compensatory time in lieu of paid overtime must:

- exceed 8 hours in a day or 40 hours in a week; and
- be officially ordered or approved (employees cannot approve their own overtime);
- be actually performed by an employee;
- be documented in writing with the documentation attached to the T&A log;
- be in addition to the normal daily or weekly work requirement.

Credit hours are hours worked in excess of an employee's basic work requirement, which the employee elects to work and the supervisor approves so as to vary the length of the workweek or a workday. Credit hours must not be used before they are earned; cannot be earned on a holiday during the hours that correspond to the employee's regularly scheduled hours for that day; and cannot be earned by intermittent employees. [Reference P&P 402.3, Premium Pay, and P&P 402.1, Flexible Work Schedules.]

Verify that supervisors/employees understand the administration of leave as follows:

- administrative leave (which is usually applied uniformly in an organization);
- advance of sick leave, and the advance of annual leave. Advanced sick leave and advanced annual leave must be requested with justification.
- The advance of sick leave is limited to 240 hours. Note: Employees with NTE dates are eligible for advance sick leave not-to-exceed the amount of sick leave they will earn in the remaining period of employment. The advance of annual leave is limited to the amount of annual leave the employee can earn during the remainder of the current leave year.

Verify supervisors are aware an SF-52 must be initiated for any LWOP request that will exceed 30 consecutive days [Reference P&P 402.6, Leave].

Verify the Location understands that full time employees do not accrue annual or sick leave during any pay period in a leave year in which they accumulate a total of 80 hours of LWOP. Also, verify with supervisors that terminal annual leave is only allowable in certain circumstances and they notify timekeepers when applicable. [Reference P&P 402.6, Leave.]

Determine if Federal Labor Standards Act (FLSA) nonexempts are being paid for attending training outside working hours. [This is only appropriate if the training is to bring the employee up to an acceptable level of competence, provides the employee knowledge necessary to perform duties, or the employee is directed to participate.

Each employee's AD-332, Position Description Cover Sheet identifies the position as FLSA exempt or nonexempt. Reference P&P 402.3, Premium Pay.]

Verify the Location has a hazardous weather dismissal plan and it is readily available to and understood by the employees.  
[Reference P&P 402.6, Leave.]

**4.04 Performance Management** For information on questions in this section, please contact Helene Saylor on 301-504-1432 or reference the HRD website - topic "Performance Management."

Review a sampling of performance plans and appraisals for the following:

Verify performance plans are in place and annual ratings of record are being conducted for covered employees,

Verify employees are covered under the correct rating cycle (i.e. December 31 or March 31),

Verify that performance plans are current, and accurate and relevant to the position,

Verify there are three, but not more than 10 elements, of which one must be critical, but not all,

Verify a separate critical element addressing EEO/CR is included in each supervisor's performance plans. (Positions classified as supervisor usually include the term Supervisory, Supervisor, Manager, Officer, or Administrator in the title.),

Verify EEO/CR objectives are incorporated in a critical element (typically communications/customer service) in each non-supervisor's performance plan,

Verify plans include a critical element (not a separate critical element) addressing supervisory responsibility,

Verify plans include a health and safety element where job related or required by the Area,

Verify OSQR objectives are addressed in Category 1 and Category 4 scientist plans,

Verify midyear reviews are conducted and documented,

Verify performance plans have been in place at least 90 days before an employee has been rated and that annual performance ratings are completed within established time frames (within 90 days of the end of the rating cycle or within time frames prescribed by a labor management agreement) and,

Verify performance plans and annual appraisals are reviewed and approved by a person at a higher organizational level than that of the rating official.

**4.05 Awards** - For information on questions in this section, please contact Helene Saylor on 301-504-1432, or reference the HRD website – topic "Awards."

By sampling of awards and discussions with Location employees, review for the following:

- Verify the incentive awards program, including Spot and Time-Off awards as well as Non-Monetary awards, is being used at the Location,
- Verify performance awards are being submitted in a timely manner, specifically time to the period of award coverage. (Performance awards should be given within 60-90 days of end of the appraisal period),
- Verify AD-287 forms are signed with two levels of approval. (AD-287 forms must have the signatures of the recommending individual and the approving official),
- Verify awards are approved at a management level higher than that of the recommending individual,

- Verify the ARS delegation of authority for approval of awards or any other Area approval policy is being followed,
- Verify true accomplishments and achievements area being recognized,
- Verify through discussions with the LAO: Is there a pattern in the approval of awards? Are the same employees receiving them all the time? Are only higher graded employees receiving awards? Are there unusual differences in the amounts of the awards among awardees?
- Verify employees, managers, supervisors, and teams/groups are recognized for demonstrating superior equal employment opportunity accomplishments,
- Verify AD-287 forms are being initiated and sent to HRD for Spot Awards. (Ensure that convenience checks are no longer being used for the spot awards payments), and
- Verify written justifications are attached to AD-287 forms for awards over \$500 and for Time-Off Awards over 10 hours.

**4.06 Training** - For information on questions in this section, please contact Marianne Plumb on 301 504-1470.

Review a sampling of Individual Development Plans (IDPs), which are required by the Agency. Determine if the IDP is a joint effort on the part of the supervisor and employee and if it is updated annually. [Reference P&P 440.1, Employee Training and Development.]

Review the employee orientation procedures followed at the Location. Reference P&P 412.2, Appointment and Orientation of New Employees and the New Employee Orientation Program Guide. Ensure that each orientation package includes:

1. A copy of "Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch" and "Employee Responsibilities and Conduct"
2. The USDA Handbook on "Workplace Violence Prevention and Response"
3. A copy of the publication, "Handling Diversity in the Workplace."
4. A copy of the publication, "Sexual Harassment"

Note: New researchers and research supervisors should be properly oriented to the Research Position Evaluation System (RPES). Verify they been instructed to bookmark the RPES Home Page (<http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/rpes/>) and been shown the 3-part video series.

**4.07 Position Description/Management** - For information on questions in this section, please contact the REE Classification Officer on 301-504-1451.

Verify supervisors understand their responsibility for assigning work and for certifying to the accuracy of the position description. Do they know whom to call with questions on writing position descriptions, requesting desk audits, and on appeal procedures? [P&P 431.1, Position Management and Position Classification, 10/02/02]

Verify the Locations are maintaining the official position description copies certified by Headquarters, and all employees have position descriptions that reflect current duties and responsibilities. Verify collateral duty statements contained in position descriptions when appropriate. (Collateral duties should be identified in position descriptions if they are regular and recurring.) [P&P 431.1, Position Management and Position Classification, 10/02/02]

**4.08 Employee Relations** - For information on questions in this section, please contact Roxanne Barnes (Employee Relations) on 301- 504-1501 or Sue Mutchler (Ethics) on 301 504-1442.

Verify supervisors, managers and employees understand procedures for addressing conduct and performance issues. Are supervisors aware that the authority to propose and to decide conduct and performance actions has been delegated to the Area?

Verify the Location follows the outside employment and conflict of interest requirements found in 5 CFR Part 8301, USDA Supplemental Standards of Ethical Conduct. Note: All employees who file a public or confidential financial disclosure report must obtain approval, ARS-101A, prior to any involvement in outside employment.

Verify Ethics Advisor lists (names and phone numbers) are either posted or readily available to all employees, and are updated at least annually.

**4.09 Occupational Medical Surveillance Program** - For information on questions in this section, please contact Bill Duggan (Exit Clearance Procedures) on 202-720-7638 or Ann Lucas (Occupational Medical Surveillance Program) on 301-504-1487

Determine if there are any problems with retirement/separation procedures. [Reference P&P 235.0, Employee Exit Clearance Procedures, October 1998.] Specifically,

- (1) Verify AD-581's for lump sum payments are forwarded for processing within 2 weeks of the employee's last day of work;
- (2) Verify all separating employees are given an SF 8 and a copy of the separating employee's SF 52 is faxed to the Frick Company.

Determine if the Occupational Medical Surveillance Program (OMSP) is being utilized at the Location? (Employee participation is not required but should be encouraged). Are OMSP results of employee medical examinations being forwarded to the Medical Review Officer (USPHS-DFOH) by the local provider? [Reference Manual 230.0-ARS, Safety, health & Environmental Management Program.]

## CARE FUNCTIONAL REVIEW INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ACTIVITIES

Additional information on the subjects in this section can be found at the Information Technology Division (ITD) homepage: <http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/divisions/itd/>

**5.01 AFM Systems** - For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact, please contact Doug Page on 301-504-1121.

Is the Location experiencing any problems updating information in the REE Directory? Is the Location updating the REE Directory regularly?

The REE Directory contains information on all ARS employees. Each Location should verify personnel and locator information on [http://isbprod.ars.usda.gov/dir2/viewemp\\$.startup](http://isbprod.ars.usda.gov/dir2/viewemp$.startup) and submit needed updates. Contact the ITS for assistance.

**5.02 Voice/Data/Video Telecommunications** - For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact E. Linda Rafats on 301-504-1090. NOTE: Due to the reorganization of the ARS CIO office, some questions will be referred to that office.

Does the Location have a circuit (or more than one circuit)? Is this circuit in the list provided to the CARE team? If not, please note this and obtain as many details about the circuit as possible. (vendor - university? Local Exchange Carrier? Other?)

Is the Location aware of and has it participated in the planning process for telecommunications services and equipment in accordance with USDA DR 3300-1 and the USDA Telecommunications Network Stabilization and Migration Program (TNSMP)?

Is the Location aware of changes due to the ARS CIO reorganization and their impact on circuit ordering and implementation?

By Departmental policy (DR 3300-1 and TNSMP), dedicated telecommunications purchases, regardless of dollar value or source, are subject to strict planning and procurement processes. Dedicated telecommunications includes all aspects of data telecommunication, including dial-up access to networks, PBXs, KSUs, Frame Relay circuits, or wireless equipment. Routers, switches, and hubs are also included.

Has the Location obtained a waiver from USDA's Chief Information Officer before acquiring dedicated telecommunications equipment and service that was not included in the forecast? If the Location did not forecast a dedicated item that it now requires, it must work with its ITS, as well as the ARS Telecommunications Mission Area Control Officer (TMACO), to obtain a waiver from the CIO (see the TNSMP).

Does the Location share telecommunications services and equipment with other USDA organizations?

Departmental policy (DR 3300-1 and the TNSMP) requires Locations to evaluate sharing services and equipment with other USDA agencies and to share when it is:

- Cost-effective (includes one-time and ongoing costs),
- Functionally effective (includes security and administrative support), and

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- The agencies are sharing the same city, building, or campus of buildings. (Clarification: If two organizations are in the same city, a local circuit can be run between them to allow only one WorldCom circuit to the Departmental IAN.)

The Location must work with its Area IT Specialist, as well as the ARS/CIO office, to review such possibilities (see the TNSMP).

Does the Location know its local telephone billing details? Does it understand that the FTS2001/WorldCom contract is mandated by USDA for international long-distance, and local-toll calling?

Departmental policy requires that the WorldCom/FTS2001 contract be used for these services. However, some Locations may not be able to comply with some provisions of this requirement because they are using university or state services that are mandatory for that Location. The CARE team should note exceptions in the report with the reason the Location is not using the FTS2001 contract.

Has the Location consulted the GSA Federal Wireless Contract prior to acquiring cellular or pager services or the WorldCom/FTS2001 contract to acquire pager service?

The GSA Federal Wireless and the GSA WorldCom/FTS2001 contracts are not mandatory for these services but Locations are required to compare these contracts prior to ordering equipment or service elsewhere. Contact the Area Office and Linda Rafats on 301-504-1090 for further information and cost-benefit analysis support. If the service has been in place for over a year, it should be reviewed for cost-effectiveness with other, current, plans.

Does the Location have radio frequencies? If yes, are they authorized NTIA frequencies? Have authorized National Telecommunications Information Administration (NTIA) frequencies been reviewed within the last five years? Has the radio, telemetry (measuring weather or water for example) or Global Positioning System (GPS) equipment been certified for narrow-banding? If no, when does the Location plan to replace this equipment? (Contact person: Maureen Harris 301-504-1108)

If the Location uses radios, telemetry, or GPS equipment, it must have authorization for a Government radio frequency on file (per USDA DR 3300-1 and ARS Directive 260.1 (being revised)). Due to the upcoming mandatory transition to narrowband, the NTIA has instituted a program whereby all Government agencies that operate land mobile radio systems in the frequency bands of 162-174 MHz (VHF) and 406-420 MHz (UHF) will convert from the present 25 KHz channel spacing to 12.5 KHz channel spacing by January 1, 2005 and January 1, 2008 respectively. Any equipment purchased after 1995 should have been narrowband capable meaning it can be programmed to 12.5 KHz channel spacing. Come the dates above, the equipment must operate plus or minus 12.5 KHz (narrowband) on either side of the assigned frequency. Examples of telemetry and GPS equipment: transmitters on bugs or cows sending information to data collection systems; wireless hydrologic measurement tools; GPS systems on tractors; weather condition measurement tools sending information back to a central collection point using wireless modems.

After receipt of a request for a frequency assignment, the REE Frequency Manager is responsible for requesting a Radio Frequency Authorization (RFA) through the Department from the NTIA. Prior to using the radio frequency, a Location must have the Radio Frequency Authorization (RFA) in hand. Ideally, the RFA should be had prior to purchase of equipment. NOTE: Requests for new radio frequency assignments take at least six months, and often much longer. So planning is important. In accordance with NTIA and USDA directives, all RFAs must be reviewed every five years from original approval or modification so that frequencies no longer required can be released for use elsewhere. The Radio Frequency Manager is in charge of this review and locations must contact her for further information.

Locations may not use non-Government (FCC) frequencies, such as those utilized by radios purchased from Radio Shack. The use of non-Government (FCC) radio frequencies that are licensed to local public safety or university organizations are allowed ONLY with a mutually-approved arrangement. As part of this arrangement, the Government agency must obtain from the non-Government licensee, written certification that the Government operation of these radios is necessary. A copy of this certification should be forwarded to the REE Frequency Manager.

Is the Location leadership part of a COOP plan? If so, is there a GETS card, secure telephone (landline, satellite, or cellular) or fax available? Is each person who has responsibility for these aware of current regulations?

DR 3300-1, Appendices D and J, define the requirements for National security and emergency preparedness telecommunications. Contact the Area Office or Linda Rafats on 301-504-1090 for assistance.

Is the organization using current videoconferencing technology (less than five years old)? If not, is the Location aware of videoconferencing options available on the FTS2001/WorldCom contract and other sources?

The FTS2001/WorldCom contract provides solutions for videoconferencing. In addition, USDA DR 3300-1 Appendix E requires Locations to consider sharing existing Federal Government video facilities before acquiring new equipment. If there is already equipment at a Location, but sharing is not feasible, the Location must send a proposal through the APMO and ITD to the USDA/OCIO for approval. Specific procedures are outlined in Appendix E.

**5.03 Information Systems Security** - For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Bill Keen on 301-504-1072. Additional information regarding the subjects in this section, can be found at the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) Cyber Security homepage:

[http://www.arsnet.usda.gov/ocio\\_intra/cybersecurity/policy.html](http://www.arsnet.usda.gov/ocio_intra/cybersecurity/policy.html)

Has a Security Point of Contact been assigned at the Location?

P&P 253.3, "ARS Information Systems Security Program", states that a Security Point of Contact must be assigned at each ARS Location by the Area Administrative Officers, with the assistance from Location Coordinators.

The Security Point of contact serves as primary security liaison with the Area Information Technology Specialist (AITS)/Deputy Security Officer and the Headquarters Information System Program Manager (ISSPM).

Has information about the Security Point of Contact been provided to the Agency ISSPM and if so, is it current?

The ARS Office of the Chief Information Officer (CIO) keeps a current file of all after duty security Points of Contact in the event a security incident occurs after hours. The following information can be electronically sent to [bkeen@ars.usda.gov](mailto:bkeen@ars.usda.gov):

- Name of contact(s)
- Work number
- After hours number
- Pager (if applicable)
- Cell number (if applicable)
- E-mail address
- Platforms: Server/PC type, software, html editor
- Operating system and version
- Internet Protocol (IP) addresses

Does the Location access the Internet through the USDA Internet Access Network (IAN) or another approved means?

If Internet access is through any means other than the IAN, such as a commercial Internet Service Provider (ISP) or university, interim guidance, CS-003, "USDA Internet Access Security for Private Internet Service Providers," requires a technical waiver be obtained. The waiver request must be submitted through the AITS and the Information Technology Division to the OCIO for approval. Contact the AITS for assistance..

If the Location accesses the Internet through a method other than the USDA IAN, what security measures are in place to protect information resources from the Internet?

If the Location is using a local provider or university there is a good chance they will not know what security measures in place. If this is the case please note this in the final report. If they do know of any security measures please also note in the final report. Interim guidance, CS-003-1, establishes minimum security requirements to ensure adequate protections are in place to protect USDA data from tampering, break in, and disruption.

Has a security plan been developed for each general support system and major application within the Location and submitted to the ARS Office of the Chief Information Officer (through the Area Office)?

P&P 253.3, "ARS Information Systems Security Program" requires Locations to update and submit an annual security plan. The guideline for developing ARS Information Systems Security Plans is entitled "User Guide for Developing and Evaluation Security Plans for Unclassified Federal Automated Information Systems," (the guideline) Draft Version 6.03, dated July 18, 1997." This guideline and templates can be found on the OCIO Cyber Security Home Page located at [http://www.arsnet.usda.gov/ocio\\_intra/cybersecurity/secplanGT.html](http://www.arsnet.usda.gov/ocio_intra/cybersecurity/secplanGT.html). Security plans are due to the ARS Office of the Chief Information Officer (CIO) on April 15 of each year.

If a Location's information technology is managed by a university, is there some type of Agreement in place? (i.e. Memorandum of Agreement or Understanding ((MOA))((MOU))/Research Support Agreement ((RSA))/Service Level Agreement)?

Any Agency system that maintains and processes sensitive information is required by the USDA OIG to establish some type of agreement to protect the security interests of that system.

Does the Location follow best or notable IT security practices?

The *Security Best Practices Memo*, developed by the ARS CIO's office, identifies specific rules and responsibilities applicable to all Agency system users. This document can be found at: [http://www.arsnet.usda.gov/ocio\\_intra/cybersecurity/policy.html](http://www.arsnet.usda.gov/ocio_intra/cybersecurity/policy.html). You may also use the Information Security Policy Compliance Self-Assessment check list soon to be located at [http://www.arsnet.usda.gov/ocio\\_intra/cybersecurity/securityselfaccess.pdf](http://www.arsnet.usda.gov/ocio_intra/cybersecurity/securityselfaccess.pdf).

Does the Location follow the Agency's security incident procedures?

Procedures developed by the ARS CIO's office identify the steps and actions to be taken by systems administrators when a security incident occurs.

Do employees know how to report or recognize misuses of IT resources as stated in P&P 253.4, "Use of Information

Is the Location ensuring that terminated/transferred employees no longer have access to IT resources (such as the network  
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or NFC) as outlined in P&P 426.1, "Employee Exit Clearance Procedures," dated 10/22/98?

**5.04 Information Collection from the Public** - For information on this section, please contact Yvette Anderson on 202-720-4030.

Has the Location obtained OMB approval before conducting surveys of the public?

The Paperwork Reduction Act and OMB regulations require advance OMB approval before collecting information from 10 or more persons outside the Federal Government. This includes questionnaires, surveys, and applications for services, regardless of the media. For example, Web sites are now used to gather information. For further information and assistance, first contact the Area Office, then Linda Rafats on 301-504-1090.

**5.05 Records Management** - For information on this section, please contact Steve Pollard on 202-720-3359.

Does the Location establish, maintain, protect, and dispose of records according to current National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) and Departmental and Agency policies?

According to ARS P&P 251.8 (<http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/ppweb/>), "Documentary materials created or received (by the REE agencies of USDA) in pursuance of Federal law or in connection with the transaction of public business are records and the property of the U.S. Government. They must not be removed from agency custody or destroyed without the approval of NARA. Employees may dispose of records, **regardless of media**, only in accordance with the General Records Schedules (GRS) or a NARA-approved records control schedule for the agency..." Schedules contain NARA-approved records control schedule for the Agency..."

Schedules contain NARA-approved retention periods and instructions on what to do with records when they are no longer needed to conduct Agency business." Agency records schedules, although many are outdated, can be found at the following web site: <http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/itd/recmgmt/pubs/RSc-table.PDF>. Please verify any agency dispositions by contacting Steve Pollard.

Bulletin 99-002, "Electronic Records Preservation" <http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/ppweb/> provides guidance on managing electronic records, including email. Note: in the absence of approved retention periods for agency electronic records, that cannot be printed out or saved in other media, such records must be retained in their native format. Dispositions (retentions) for administrative records (e.g., t&a's/travel vouchers) can be found on the NARA web site <http://ardor.nara.gov/grs/index.html>.

Does the Location retire or transfer eligible records to a Regional Records Facility?

Instructions for retiring/transferring records are contained in Manual 251.8M <http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/ppweb/drft251-8m.htm>. To determine which facility services the Location, staff should first contact their Area Office for advice and assistance, and then visit the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) Web site: <http://www.archives.gov/facilities/index.html> or contact Steve Pollard.

Does the Location have records that would be categorized as "National Security Classified," "Secret," or "Top Secret?" If so, are they maintained in accordance with Departmental Manual DM-3440-1, found on <http://www.usda.gov/ocio/directives/DR/DR3440-001.pdf>? Contact the Area Office, or call Steve Pollard, the REE Classified Material Control Officer, by phone on 202-720-3359, Fax: 202-720-3907, Cell: 202-746-6610, or email: [spollard@ars.usda.gov](mailto:spollard@ars.usda.gov) for further assistance.

**5.06 Policy and Procedures Management** - For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Jackie Sharp-Hendrix on 202-720-5507.

See <http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/ppweb/> for information on this subject. For information about the REE Administrative Issuances system, consult P&P 010, "The REE Administrative Issuances System," dated May 25, 1999. When new issuances are added to the P&P website or when major changes are made to issuances, the REE Issuances Manager will notify ARS Areas and LAO's via e-mail. NOTE: The P&P process is currently being revised. New issuance policies will be issued with the next year.

Is the Location using the latest version of administrative issuances that are on the P&P Web site? Are these issuances in a format that are usable to the Location?

If the Location is using issuances that have been canceled or replaced, list the number, title, and date of these issuances, as well as the reason. This will be used to help rewrite existing issuances so that they will better serve the organization.

**Forms** - For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Brenda Clark on 301-504-1117.

Go to <http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/itd/forms/forms.htm> for additional information on forms.

**5.07 Printed Matter** - For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Yvette Anderson on 202-720-4030.

Are printed envelopes or letterhead ordered?

Offices that have a need for letterhead design, envelope design, etc. should contact the representative for their Location. (ARS P&P 256.2, "Printed Letterhead, Envelopes, Postcards, Mailing Labels", dated 1/11/94 is outdated and will be rewritten. Key areas that no longer apply include the use of permit mail and penalty mail.)

Does the Location have printed matter with penalty mail or permit information printed on it?

New GSA Regulations require the Federal government to stop using penalty mail and Government permits by September 30, 2003. All existing stock must be destroyed or used up by that date.

**5.08 Mail and Messenger Services** - For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Yvette Anderson on 202-720-4030. See <http://pe.usps.gov/text/DMM/P030.htm> and <http://pe.usps.gov/text/qsg/q024.htm> for further information.

Does the Location maintain accountability records of the postage meter activity?

If the Location is metering its own mail, the US Postal Service (USPS) requires manual or automated accountability records of postage meter activity. Either PS Form 3602-A, "Daily Record of Meter Register Readings," or an in-house automated system should be used. Accountability records must be maintained for six years before disposition in accordance with the General Records Schedule.

Does the Location use the OMAS system to pay for postage?

According to GSA Mail Management Interim Rule (41 CFR Parts 101-9 and 102-192), all Federal agencies must move to a commercial system for postage. This conversion is currently taking place. If the location is using OMAS, please note this for follow up by the REE Mail Manager.

Does the Location properly secure the postage meter?

Is the postage meter inspected according to postal regulations (see above Web sites for table)?

Is the Mail Meter printing a penalty mail logo or a permit number and logo?

The Location will need to move to commercial mail meters not later than September 30, 2003. The REE Mail Manager needs to be contact to assure the location is clear about what is needed to meet current guidance.

#### **5.09 IT Resource Planning**

Verify that the unit ARMP includes IT purchases planned and required for the fiscal year, including hardware/software replacements and purchases, dedicated telecommunications acquisitions (circuits, routers, telephone systems), maintenance and support contracts, Web-page development and support, etc.

The Location is required to forecast planned acquisitions of dedicated telecommunications services and equipment in its annual ARMP package (see Administrator's ARMP kickoff letter). Due to special Departmental mandates for telecommunications, all such equipment, regardless of cost, must be included in the forecast.

## CARE FUNCTIONAL REVIEW BUDGET AND FISCAL

For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in the following section, please contact Lisa Baldus on 301-504-1300.

### **6.0 Budget and Fiscal (General)**

In the interview process, determine whether Location management officials (LC, RL's and LAO/T) believe that adequate support (e.g., guidance/instructions/ Agency P&P issuances, financial reviews for dealing with problems or issues, etc.) is given from ARS Headquarters and the Area Office to manage and control Agency programs, assets, and resources.

Ensure that all recommendations from recent audits and reviews (including CARE reviews, and financial reviews) have been resolved, and appropriate corrective action taken. If not, explain.

#### **6.01 CRIS Accountability**

Verify that RL's understand and correctly interpret the Agency's Current Research Information System (CRIS) accountability policy, and that they are spending dollars by CRIS in accordance with the Budget and Program Management Staff (BPMS) approved allocation.

In order to do so, review the Location's most current CRIS Activities Module (CAM) report. Determine whether there are deviations in planned versus actual expenditures of more than plus or minus 5% or \$50,000, whichever is less. If so, determine whether approvals were obtained for these expenditure variances. If approvals were not obtained, cite what CRIS is not in compliance, and the percentage or amount in variance. (Policy and Procedure Number 315.0)

Determine if obligations in Location Obligation Tracking System (LOTS) status of funds reports appear to be made to the benefiting CRIS.

In order to do so, review a representative sample of large obligation transactions and attempt to determine whether the obligations are consistent with the type of research conducted in the CRIS (i.e., it would not be consistent for a human nutrition related CRIS to purchase a tractor.) If obligations do not appear to be charged to the benefiting CRIS, explain.

#### **6.02 Research Cost**

##### **6.02-1 Indirect Research Costs (IRC) and Shared Research Costs (SRC)**

Determine whether each CRIS was assessed for IRC or SRC and "All Other" fixed costs according to established Agency policy.

In order to do so, examine the ARMP CRIS Allocation Schedules (CRAS) and supporting worksheets or other documentation developed for the last ARMP. Wherever possible, costs should be assigned based on actual usage of resources. Cost accounting prorations based on FTE, SY's or dollars are acceptable but should only be used after ruling out other more, precise methods of assigning common support costs (i.e., space occupied, number of telephones, etc.) (The ARMS manual; P&P 329.5) If IRC and SRC worksheets or other documentation are not available to support the assessment methodologies used, explain.

Does the Location have the latest ARMPS instructions? Do they feel the instructions are clear, concise, timely, and easy to understand?

### **6.03 ARMPS Preparation/Implementation**

Inquire whether the ARMP process adequately allows the Location to prepare and update a comprehensive detailed annual operating plan for spending funds and accomplishing program objectives. Document any suggestions for improvement.

Ensure that the Location is planning at least 4 percent of base funds on R&M as required by ARMP policy contained in the ARMS manual (unless the Location has been granted a documented exception to the policy).

In order to verify that at least 4% of base funds is planned for R&M spending, add amounts in object class 2530 on the Location's ARMP Annual Operating Plans (AOP's) and compare that total to the total base funds for the Location. If the total object class 2530 amount is less than 4%, determine what other budgeted amounts the Location considers to be R&M, and explain.

### **6.04 Allocations**

Ensure that official allocations are adhered to in establishing LOTS financial plans at the Management Unit level and for CRIS subaccounts.

In order to do so, compare LOTS financial plans to the budget documentation provided by the ABFO. MU totals can be verified against FFIS records.

### **6.05 Salary Estimates/Tracking**

Make sure employee salaries are being charged to CRIS subaccounts as planned on the approved ARMP. In order to do so, compare the ARMPS CRIS Resource Allocation Schedules with the SAMS.

Determine if any problems are encountered by the Location in using SAMS to account for salaries. If so, explain.

#### **6.05-1 Salary Lapse Reporting**

Review salary lapse reports to determine if they accurately reflect the amount of lapse to the CRIS level. Review offsets on specific positions to validate that the offsets were appropriate (Reference Ground Rules to Salary Lapse). Ensure that the appropriate amounts are reflected on the LOTS Financial Plan.

### **6.06 Period-End Estimates**

Determine whether the Location fully understands ARS Year-end Closing Instructions and Procedures, including preparation of period-end estimates. Inquire whether the Location has any ideas on improving the year-end instructions and procedures.

## **6.07 Prior-Year Funding**

Inquire whether the Location is aware of P&P's for prior-year fund approval requests. For requests of \$1,000 or under, the approval process is not required. For requests of \$1,001 or more, a Form ARS 323-8 (or an E-mail message containing the same information as the form) must be completed and approved. For requests exceeding \$10,000, a certification of funds availability must be requested from the Financial Management Division--an e-mail message request is sufficient. (P&P 323.8, as amended.) For requests exceeding \$25,000, FMD approval is required.

## **6.08 Prompt Payment**

Determine whether the Location management is aware and sensitive to the Prompt Payment Act (budget object code 4310) requirement that an interest penalty must be paid to the vendor, with the invoice amount, for invoices not paid 30 days after receipt (interest is charged directly to the fundholder's account). (Review the CARE characteristics package for information on recent interest amounts charged to the Location.)

NOTE: In the FFIS environment, the vendor record in VEND must reflect the appropriate payment terms. If there is excessive interest, determine whether correct information is obtained from the vendor and communicated to the vendor coordinator.

## **6.09 Claims for and Against the Government**

Ensure that the Location has access to instructions for processing and disposition of claims (P&P 328.0 - Claims for the Government; P&P 227.1 - Claims against the Government).

## **6.10 Collections**

In accordance with procedures in the FMM, Chapter 2600; P&P326.0; and Bulletin 02-314:

Ensure that a collections official has been properly designated by inspecting their letter of designation from the Area office. Ensure that they are aware of all responsibilities.

Ensure that all collections (cash, checks, etc.) received by the Location are properly secured and that they are promptly deposited/credited into the lock box to the proper miscellaneous receipt or appropriated fund account.

Ensure that proper vendor codes are being used.

## **6.11 Accounting/LOTS**

Ensure that there is effective coordination/interface of LOTS with other Agency systems (e.g., ARMPS, FFIS, SAMS, ARIS, etc.). The Current Year column of the ARMP should be the initial financial plan amount in LOTS. LOTS must be reconciled with FFIS reports on a monthly basis. The "CAS Obligation" column in LOTS Status of Funds Report should be tied into the cumulative obligations of the FFIS OCA Report. Budget documentation provided by the ABFO must be used to update MU financial plans in LOTS. SAMS should be used to incorporate salary projections into LOTS.

Ensure that the information/data produced by LOTS is verifiable; i.e., that the information/data can be traced to the source documents.

In order to do so, review LOTS posted and unposted obligations on transaction listings. Select a random sample of transactions and verify that corresponding obligation documents are found in the Location files.

Ensure that Location funds control records are reconciled monthly with FFIS reports, and that unusual or unidentified items are followed up on with the ABFO. The local funds control records should be thought of as a "check book" and the FFIS reports should be thought of as an "official bank statement." Transactions appearing in the FFIS reports must be "posted" in local funds control reports in order to maintain accurate account balances.

## **6.12 Status of Funds**

Determine whether the Location uses the Automated LOTS Reporting Module (ALRM). ALRM provides enhanced reporting capabilities over LOTS. If the Location is not using ALRM, inquire why.

Ensure that fundholders receive monthly status of funds reports from LOTS and/or ALRM in accordance with Directive 325.1. Although not required, it is suggested that fundholders also receive SAMS "Liability to MU" reports.

Inquire whether the reports are adequate for the fundholder's needs. If not, explain.

Ensure that each fundholder reviews detailed financial transactions charged against their accounts from LOTS printouts, at least three times a year, to determine if the documents belong to the MU. If there have been invalidly charged obligations, explain.

### **6.12-1 CRIS Activities Module (CAM)**

Determine if the Location encounters any difficulties in the use of CAM for downloading LOTS year-end planned versus actual CRIS subaccount data into special reports for BPMS. If so, determine the issues to be resolved, and explain.

### **6.12-2 Cuff Records**

Determine if fundholders maintain any funds tracking records (cuff records) in addition to the LOTS reports maintained by the Location support staff. If yes, explain. As stated in ARS P&P 325.1, "LOTS will be used by employees throughout ARS as the only Location funds control system. No other system (either manual or automated) will be used or supported...Fundholders and their subordinates should generally not maintain any financial records, but should rely on the information produced by the LAO/T. The fundholder may maintain a simple pending file of outstanding documents, which could be totaled and deducted from the LOTS Status of Funds report. The maintenance of additional records by research scientists and research support personnel should be strongly discouraged."

**6.13 Travel** - For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in the following section, please contact Linda Mahoney on 301-504-1307.

Ensure that written policies and procedures relating to travel are readily available for access at the Location. These are available on the web (<http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/fmd/issurance.htm#travel>).

Ensure that delegations of authority for approving travel are in writing, that they are accessible, and that responsibilities are effectively discharged. In order to do so, review the Location travel files.

Determine if controls are in place to ensure that personal travel, when commingled with official travel, is not charged to the Government.

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In order to do so, review travel authorizations and travel vouchers for cases of mixed travel and make sure days of personal expenses were not charged to the Government.

**VERY IMPORTANT.** In accordance with the General Records Schedule, paper copies of transmitted transactions (bearing the original signatures of all parties) and supporting documents (e.g., receipts) must be retained for a 6-year and 4-month period. Agency offices that use the online data entry component to enter travel transactions are the official record keepers of the original paper copies of the transmitted transactions. These offices must follow the record retention requirements established by the National Archives and Records Administration in the AGeneral Records Schedule@.

#### **6.13-1 Travel Authorizations**

Ensure that all travel orders are reviewed by properly authorized individuals, other than the traveler, to determine that travel is official in purpose and nature and clearly stated, absolutely necessary, consolidated with other trips if feasible, and amounts estimated are reasonable.

Ensure that the use of types B and N travel authorizations are limited only to individuals whose frequent, routine, repetitive travel requirements make individual trip authorizations (Type C) unrealistic and those positions have been pre-determined by the Administrator to be issued the type B or N travel authorization.

Determine if there were more than three instances during the last fiscal year of fund holders (or supervisors) post approving their subordinates' travel. (This procedure indicates a breakdown in the proper pre-approval process for authorizations) If yes, explain.

#### **6.13-2 Travel Advances**

Ensure that employees leaving the Agency have paid back any travel advance balances.

Ensure that travel advances are only issued in conjunction with an approved travel authorization; and returned promptly when a trip is completed, canceled, or delayed past a reasonable time (P&P 342.3). Emphasis should be made on travel advances open to non-Government persons traveling for the Government. NOTE TO CARE TEAM: The number of travel advances should have decreased with the use of the Automated Teller Machines under the Travel charge card program.

Ensure that managers are notified of outstanding travel advance balances at the Location on a regular basis. Employees performing the travel function at the Location should be performing this function. Inquire whether they are.

#### **6.13-3 Travel Vouchers**

Interview the employees performing the travel function to determine if the Location is experiencing any problems with processing travel vouchers. If so, explain. Review the travel files to ensure that vouchers are being prepared accurately and according to prior authorization.

#### **6.13-4 Relocation Allowances**

Ensure that obligations/adjustments are being properly accounted for. The authorized amount on the travel authorization appearing in TRVL must be deobligated, based on actual obligations and reflected in the Location's accounts maintenance records. There must be a review by accounts maintenance personnel to ensure that TRVL has properly deobligated relocation amounts.

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#### **6.13-5 Mandatory Use of Contract Travel Agencies**

Ensure that all tickets are being purchased through a contracted travel management center.

Ensure that there are sufficient internal controls at the Location for safeguarding undistributed tickets. Determine if a safe or a suitable locked file cabinet is available to store the tickets. (P&P 343.4, Use of Contract Air Services.)

Determine if a review of travel authorization/itineraries is made before tickets are given to travelers. Inquire this of both travelers and employees performing the travel function at the Location.

Determine whether unused/partially used tickets are promptly returned for credit to the Government. Review procedures with employees performing the travel function at the Location.

#### **6.13-6 Government Transportation Requests (GTR's)**

Ensure that accountability is adequately maintained at the Location for maintenance and use of GTR's. Make sure that only the accountable employee has access to the book of GTR's assigned to them. Determine if the Location knows how to transfer accountability between employees by preparing an AD-497 request for TR Action to NFC. (NFC Voucher and Invoice Payments Manual - Title II, Chapter 2, Section 3)

Ensure that there are sufficient internal controls at the Location for safeguarding GTR's. Determine if a safe or a suitable locked file cabinet is available to store the GTR's.

#### **6.13-7 Travel Charge Cards**

Ensure that employees with travel charge cards are using them to pay for travel expenses only.

Ensure that employees leaving the Agency turn in their charge cards. In order to do so, request to see the Exit Clearance form and check list (in accordance with P&P 426.1, Employee Exit Clearance Procedures). If employee is going to another USDA agency, the travel charge card shall be transferred. If not, the card must be cancelled.

#### **6.13-8 Foreign Travel** - For information on this section, please contact Lisa Baldus on 301-504-1300.

Inquire whether the Location experiences any problems in processing foreign travel requests (e.g., HQ/Area approvals, passports, visas, etc.). If so, document the specific issues involved. (P&P 345.3)

Inquire whether the Location experiences any problems using the Foreign Travel Information System via ARIS. If so, document the problems.

Under the pilot program for delegation and retention of official passports:

- Ensure that passport receipts and a passport log are maintained in accordance with Agency guidelines.
- Ensure that all passports and documentation are secured in a suitable locked fireproof cabinet/safe.

#### **6.14 Utility Accounts**

Ensure that the Location knows how to establish utility accounts with NFC through completion of the Form AD-474 Transmittal-Telephone and Utilities. Instructions are contained in the NFC Voucher and Invoice Payments Manual.

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Determine if the Location is encountering any problems with utility payments or reconciliation of accounts. If so, explain.

Ensure that obligations for SIBAC, OPAC, Motor Pool, GPO, GSA, etc., are appearing on the Transaction Detail Listing (TDL). If not, determine if the Location is taking corrective action with NFC and/or the appropriate Government vendor agency.

## **6.15 Agreement Accounting**

### **6.15-1 Research Support Agreement (RSA) Expenditure Tracking**

Ensure that the ADODR or designee reconciles RSA cooperator billing data (i.e., the Monthly Management Reports or SF-1034 vouchers) with documentation submitted by the RL's (i.e., packing slips, delivery tickets, memoranda, etc.) to ensure receipt of goods and services billed for.

Ensure that the Location maintains an adequate tracking system for comparison of actual expenditures to the Task Order obligation(s). Some Locations use LOTS for this purpose; others use automated spreadsheets.

### **6.15-2 Trust Funds and Reimbursable Agreements**

Refer to Bulletins 02-316 and 02-314.

Ensure that the Location waits for receipt of authorization from ABFO before initiating research activity for the cooperator. Trust fund agreements require an up-front payment from the cooperator before work may begin.

Ensure that the Location is aware of carry-over implications for multi-year appropriation authorities. When the ordering agency has statutory multi-year spending authority, funds provided by the agreement are available for obligation by ARS for the specified years, subject to limitations imposed by the ordering Agency. This will ordinarily result in carryover amounts from one fiscal year to another of any unobligated balance. The providing agency has the prerogative of stipulating the dollar amount that should be expended by fiscal year. (FMM Chapter 2400, Section 2415.1.2)

### **6.15-3 Sales/Exchange Funds**

Ensure that the LAO/T and APO are following the required exchange/sale procedures. In the acquisition, sale, or exchange of property, both the item to be acquired and the item to be replaced must fall within a single category identified in the Federal Property Management Regulations. Proceeds from the exchange/sale of property are available for obligation to purchase replacement property during the year in which the property was sold plus one additional fiscal year. (FMM Chapter 2400, Section 2415.5) Separate accounts are established for suspense (sales proceeds) and reimbursement (repurchases) and are tracked by fiscal year of availability. (FMM Chapter 2400, and Section 2470). Review the Location files to determine if requirements for sale/exchange funds are being met. If not, explain.

### **6.15-4 Quarters**

In accordance with the FMM, Chapter 2400, Section 2480:

Review Location files to ensure that employee quarters payments are made through proper coding of Time and Attendance reports to accomplish payroll deductions. (Collections that are not received through payroll deductions must

be paid into the Treasury Miscellaneous Receipt Account) and thus are not available to the Location for obligation.)

Review Location files to determine whether quarters rental receipts are used only for upkeep of the Government residences, as required. If not explain.

#### **6.15-5 Revolving Fund**

Determine if the Location has a university (or cooperator) administered "revolving fund" composed of proceeds from the sale of Location animals, crops, or related by-products. If yes, provide the dollar amount, and describe the record keeping responsibilities between ARS and the university (or cooperator).

Ensure that the anticipated funding amount is annotated on the ARMP.

Determine if ARS employees have the authority to authorize (or cause) expenditures to be made from this fund. If yes, explain if they are doing so according to the terms of the MOU or agreement. An ARS official may not, under any circumstances, approve by signatory authority any obligation documents covered under a revolving fund. Review the Location files to determine whether this may be happening. If so, explain.

#### **6.16 Reference Manuals**

Ensure that budget/fiscal external procedures (including ARS P&P's) are complete, readily accessible, up-to-date, and are being properly followed. Attach or reference any internal procedures developed by the Location.

Ensure that references are readily available for each of the following subject areas and that they are being fully utilized and understood: LOTS; ALRM; FFIS; FMM; SAMS; ARMPS; NFC Procedures Manuals; & Travel

#### **6.17 Training**

Through the interview and review process, determine whether employees are trained in budget/fiscal operations to perform their duties, and whether the Location has sufficient staff to carry out budget/fiscal functional responsibilities.

#### **6.18 Budget/Fiscal Records Management**

Ensure that budget/fiscal records are maintained and disposed of in accordance with P&P 251.8, which provides records distribution schedules for administrative and financial management files.

## CARE FUNCTIONAL REVIEW CIVIL RIGHTS

For information on interpretation or clarification of the functional questions in this section, please contact Sue Dixon, Office of Civil Rights, 202-720-6161.

Note: References include Departmental Regulation No. 4300-6; USDA and ARS Policy Statements

### **7.01 Special Emphasis Programs**

Does the Location initiate and conduct programs and other activities to increase awareness/representation of women, minorities and persons with disabilities? (This includes special observance celebrations, display of special observance month posters, and other educational and awareness activities.)

### **7.02 Outreach Efforts**

What outreach efforts have been made by the Location to increase awareness of ARS programs and activities? (This includes visits to schools, tours, direct contact with local community resources, cooperative efforts with universities, high schools, and professional public and private organizations, etc.)

### **7.03 Recruitment Efforts and Affirmative Action Program**

What efforts has the Location made to hire minorities, persons with disabilities, and female applicants into positions where there is under-representation?

Are there any specific EEO activities/hiring objectives that the Location has undertaken in the past 2 years? If so, what are the results? Was assistance requested from the Area Civil Rights Manager or HQ Civil Rights Staff and did they provide assistance?

### **7.04 Persons with Disabilities**

Have there been any activities to foster or facilitate the employment of persons with disabilities including making reasonable accommodations for known physical or mental limitations of qualified applicants and employees with disabilities??

### **7.06 Communication**

Are current USDA/ARS/Area policy statements for EEO/CR and the prevention of sexual harassment prominently displayed on all official bulletin boards? (Agriculture Secretary's and ARS Administrator's policy statements). Has the LC/CD/RL communicated his/her commitment and support of the USDA/ARS/CR program objectives to all Location employees? How or what mechanism was used?

Are the posters "Discrimination in Employment is Illegal" and "And Justice For All" prominently displayed on all official bulletin boards?

### **7.07 Training**

Have all Location/Area employees completed the current mandatory Civil Rights training?

*As of 02/27/2003*

## CARE FUNCTIONAL REVIEW EXTRAMURAL AGREEMENTS

For information on the interpretation or clarification on the functional questions in this section, please contact Sherri Carroll on 301-504-1148.

### **8.01 Extramural Agreements Program (General)**

Reference Extramural Agreements Manual (EAM), 280.0

Determine what staff members at the Location are involved in the agreements process and if there are any concerns about the turn-around time in full execution of agreements. If so, what is the average time for:

- Obtaining official CRIS approval (starting at the Location, up-to the Area, and finally through NPS)
- Assembly of a complete extramural agreement package to be forwarded to the Authorized Departmental Officer (ADO) for authorization/award. A complete package includes the following supporting documentation:
  - Form AD-700 indicating the fundholder's commitment, award amount and accounting code information
  - Statement of work/proposal with proposed period of performance, and complete budget information. (This information should also be provided to the ADO on disk or electronically transmitted. Examples of statements of work can be obtained from the ADO.)
  - Information identifying the principal parties; (ADODR, Principal Investigator, Cooperator, and their phone/fax numbers, and mailing/e-mail addresses).
  - Approved/Official CRIS documentation (except for non-research projects); i.e. Form ARS-425-Authorization to Apply for and use Funds from Outside Sources, Form AD-416-Research Resume, Form AD-417-Classification of Research and Form ARS-550-Research Agreements Plan.
  - Justification for funding increases and extensions (if applicable)

Determine if the LAO/T is maintaining a copy of the extramural agreements request package forwarded to the ADO. It is recommended that the LAO/T maintain a copy of the request package for tracking and information purposes.

Does the Location have any comments/suggestions regarding how the pre-award, award, administration and closeout process of extramural awards can be streamlined and improved? If so, evaluate the comments/suggestions for potential inclusion in the Location's CARE report.

### **8.02 Research Support Agreement (RSA)**

Reference EAM, Chapter 2400

NOTE: Under an RSA, the LAO/T is the ADODR with written delegation from the ADO.

Determine whether an RSA is being utilized at this Location. If so:

Determine whether there is a copy of the Form ARS-550 Research Agreements Plan, approved by the Area Director during the ARMPS cycle for each Research Unit using the RSA during the current fiscal year. It is recommended that the ADODR maintain a file copy of this information.

Determine whether the ADODR is aware of his/her duties and responsibilities delegated to them by the ADO for the RSA. It is recommended that the ADODR maintain a file copy of the Instructions from the ADO to the ADODR with a signed copy of the delegation acknowledgment page returned by the ADODR to the ADO.

Determine whether individual task orders issued by the ADODR are supported by a Form AD-700, description and amount of supplies, materials and services requested, a listing of occupational categories with corresponding duties and qualifications, and dates or time frames for delivery of goods or performance of services.

Determine whether the RL is submitting a properly executed Form AD-700 to the ADODR for changed requirements that would either increase or decrease an original task order. (See EAM, Chapter 2400, Section 2402.1 - Preparation of Documentation)

Determine whether the ADODR is sending task orders for goods or services to the Cooperator to request that the Cooperator (1) provide an estimated price; (2) certify that they are in a position to undertake, perform, and complete the task order; and (3) state that they will diligently perform in accordance with the provisions of the RSA.

Determine whether the services requested on each individual task order are in accordance with ARS policy and procedures regarding the acquisition of goods and personal services under an RSA. (See EAM, Chapter 2400, pages 24-1 and 24-5)

Determine whether task orders are submitted to the ADO for review to ensure accuracy and compliance with ARS policies and procedures.

Ensure that ARS is not selecting cooperator employees, administratively supervising cooperator employees, entering into employment agreements with individuals, administering cooperator payrolls, establishing wage levels, or approving or disapproving a cooperator employee's leave.

Determine whether, after execution of the task order, the ADODR is submitting to the National Finance Center (NFC) or the ABFO (PWA and SPA) in order to obligate the funds. The ADO is also on the distribution list to receive copies.

If the RSA is under HHS/Payment Management System (HHS/PMS), determine whether the Cooperator is providing a Monthly Management Report (MMR) or equivalent report to the ADODR.

Determine whether the ADODR verifies and approves the MMR based upon documentation; i.e., packing slips, delivery tickets, memoranda, etc., submitted by the cooperator and verified by the RL.

If payment method is other than HHS-PMS, determine whether the RL is properly certifying, and the ADODR verifies the receipt of goods and/or services using documentation; i.e., packing slips, delivery tickets, memoranda, etc.

If payment method is other than HHS-PMS, determine whether the ADODR is promptly submitting copies of the invoice to NFC or the ABFO (PWA and SPA) for payment. The ADO should also be on the distribution list to receive copies.

If payment method is other than HHS-PMS, determine whether cooperators are enrolled in the Vendor Express Program (VXP) for electronic funds transfer (EFT) payments.

### **8.03 Cooperative Agreements: (Specific Cooperative Agreements, Trust Fund, and Reimbursable)**

Reference EAM, Chapters 2100 and 2300

A complete extramural agreements package must be forwarded to the ADO. Ensure that the Location is aware of what constitutes a complete extramural agreements package as outlined in Section 8.01 above.

Is the Location familiar with the requirements regarding the statement of work for Specific Cooperative Agreements, Trust Funds, and Reimbursable Cooperative Agreements? (Examples of statements of work can be obtained from the ADO.)

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#### **8.04 Standard Cooperative Agreements**

Reference EAM, Chapter 2200

Determine whether the LAO/T is familiar with, and adhering to, the requirements outlined in EAM, Chapter 2200.

Examples of these requirements are:

- The responsibility for pre-award, award, administration and closeout rest with the LAO/T.
- The LAO/T must forward the draft agreement to the ADO for review and comment before the LAO/T sends a final document to the Cooperator for signature.

#### **8.05 Grants and Assistance Type Cooperative Agreements (ATCAs)**

Reference EAM, Chapter 3100

Determine whether the Location has any Grants and/or ATCAs. If so, determine whether the Location is familiar with and abiding by the requirements outlined in EAM, Chapter 3100, Section 3104.3 regarding Grant and Assistance Type Cooperative Agreements. Examples of a Grant and ATCA can be found at the end of Chapter 3100. For Example:

- If ARS intends to have substantial involvement in the work effort, is an ATCA awarded?
- If the Grant is awarded non-competitively, does the file clearly document the reasons for non-competition?

Determine whether the Grantee has submitted their proposal on their organization's letterhead and that an overall budget for the project is part of the proposal.

A complete extramural agreement package must be forwarded to the ADO. Ensure that the Location is aware of what constitutes a complete extramural agreement package as outlined in Section 8.01 above. NOTE: For ATCA's, a statement of significant involvement is also required to accompany the Statement of Work.

#### **8.06 Master Memoranda of Understanding**

Reference EAM, Chapter 4100 (100% review requirement - All files to be reviewed)

Determine if the MMOU is needed; i.e., the Area Office is reviewing the Master Memoranda of Understanding for the Location at least every 5 years to ensure that the MMOU is program relevant; i.e., that work is within the current objectives and mission of ARS.

Refer to EAM, Exhibit 41-2: Sample Master MOU

#### **8.07 Supplements to the Master MOU**

Reference EAM, Chapter 4100

Determine whether a provision is placed in each Supplement that duration is not to exceed 5 years.

Refer to EAM, Exhibit 41-3, Sample Supplement to a Master MOU

#### **8.08 Standard Memorandum of Understanding**

Reference EAM, Chapter 4100

Determine whether the LAO/T is familiar with, and adhering to, the requirements outlined in EAM, Part 4000, Section 41-7. Examples of these requirements are:

- The responsibility for pre-award, award, administration and closeout rest with the LAO/T.
- The LAO/T must forward the draft agreement to the ADO for review and comment before the LAO/T sends

a final document to the Cooperator for signature.

#### **8.09 Individual Memorandum of Understanding**

Reference EAM, Chapter 4100

Determine if IMOU's are being used when an MMOU is in place that could be supplemented.

Determine if AD approval is obtained prior to establishing an IMOU.

Determine if IMOU(s) are limited to 5 years in duration.

## **Attachment II-B - Final Written Report Format**

**CONSOLIDATED ASSISTANCE, REVIEW, AND EVALUATION**

**(CARE)**

**REPORT OF ASSISTANCE, HELP, FINDINGS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**USDA, ARS, [Location Name]  
[Location Address]  
[Location City, State, Zip Code]**

**[Review Date (e.g. March 3-7, 2003)]**

**PURPOSE:   Review of Administrative Processes in Support of the USDA Consolidated Review Program**

**CARE Review Team No. [e.g. 3]**

**[Name - Title, Duty station, Team Leader]**

**[Name - Title, Duty Station, Co-Leader]**

**[Each member participating in review Name - Title, Duty Station]**

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## PREFACE

Utilizing the principles of the USDA Consolidated Review Program (CRP), the President's Management Agenda, and the CARE Charter, members of a CARE Review Team reviewed the administrative processes at the USDA, ARS, Location Name, City, State, Date.

The approach used was a Location survey, general interviews of both program and administrative personnel utilizing questionnaires developed by the CARE Program, and a review of documents or processes/systems against a listing of administrative functions and related questions to be answered. This approach incorporates the limited review principles of the USDA CRP and the goals of the CARE Program to:

- Assist, in a helpful and practical way, those being reviewed to understand what can be done to improve their operations.
- Help to make actual changes necessary to improve operations in the true spirit of the President's Management Agenda.
- Assist those being reviewed to interpret and understand current policy and procedural guidance.
- Identify gaps in available guidance/policy/procedures that require attention in order to meet the needs of Location activities.
- Promote efficiency, economy and responsiveness to program needs through the sharing of ideas and techniques for improving administrative processes.
- Assure compliance with Federal policies and regulations by officially designated employees.

Assistance, commendations, or recommendations provided or obtained were recorded on summary documents by AFM functional code by each CARE Review Team Member and then consolidated by AFM functional code for developing this report. The enclosed Summary Assurance Statement is a consensus of the CARE Review Team and CARE Coordinator based on the limited review performed.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The USDA, ARS, Location Name, City, State, consists of X research units with approximately X employees, and an X person Location Support Staff (LSS). The Location's buildings are ARS/University owned, located on ARS/University land.

The CARE Team noticed a real effort made by the Location to provide a safe and secure work environment. The Location had a positive attitude about the review and looked at the process as a way to help identify areas that could be improved.

Significant CARE Team findings of knowledgeable disregard of Agency Policies & Procedures are reported as No Assurance. Team findings where Agency Policies & Procedures are not being adhered to are reported as Assurances with Exception. Team findings that identify Best Practices are report as Commendations. Instances where CARE Teams provided direct assistance to the Location are reported as Assistance Provided. The CARE Team expresses its appreciation for the cooperation, assistance, and genuine hospitality extended to us by Location personnel during the review.

### **No Assurance was issued in the following Section:**

Section	Issue
---------	-------

### **Assurances with Exception were issued in the following Sections:**

Section	Issue
---------	-------

### **Commendations were issued in the following Sections:**

Section	Issue
---------	-------

### **Assistance Provided were reported in the following Sections:**

Section	Issue
---------	-------

## **SPECIFIC FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS, AND ASSISTANCE**

- 1. LOCATION, AREA, AND HEADQUARTERS MANAGEMENT**
  - 1.01 Location Administrative and Financial Management**
  - 1.02 Area Administrative and Financial Management**
  - 1.03 Headquarters Administrative and Financial Management**
  - 1.04 Other**
- 2. ACQUISITION-PERSONAL PROPERTY**
  - 2.01 Requisitions**
  - 2.02 Procurement**
    - 2.02-1.01 Blanket Purchase Arrangements (BPA's)**
    - 2.02-1.02 Purchase/Delivery Orders**
    - 2.02-1.03 Purchase Cards**
    - 2.02-1.04 Training**
    - 2.02-1.05 Federal Supply Schedule**
  - 2.03 Administration**
    - 2.03-1 Simplified Acquisition**
    - 2.03-2 Receiving Reports**
    - 2.03-3 Invoice/Payments/Closeout**
  - 2.04 Personal Property**
    - 2.04-1 Organizational Structure**
      - 2.04-1.01 Training**
      - 2.04-1.02 Reference Material**
    - 2.04-2 Property Inventory, Accountability and Control**
      - 2.04-2.01 Property Receipt and Identification**
      - 2.04-2.02 Personal Property Records Maintenance**
      - 2.04-2.03 Security**
      - 2.04-2.04 Reporting Property Theft, Loss or Damage**
    - 2.04-4 Approval Clearance**
    - 2.04-5 Property Exchange**
    - 2.04-5.01 Acceptance of Gifts**
    - 2.04-6 Excess Property**
    - 2.04-6.01 Transfers under Specific USDA Donation Programs**
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- 3. FACILITIES MANAGEMENT, CONSTRUCTION, REAL PROPERTY, SAFETY, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT**
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  - 3.02 Construction Contracts**
  - 3.03 Facility Security**
    - 3.03-1 Workplace Violence**
  - 3.04 Real Property**
    - 3.04-1 Lease Agreements - Land & Space**
    - 3.04-2 Government Quarters Rentals**
    - 3.04-3 Acquisition**
    - 3.04-4 Utilization**
    - 3.04-5 Disposition**
    - 3.04-6 Easements/Revocable Permits**
    - 3.04-7 Property Management**

*As of 02/27/2003*

3.05-1	<u>Safety, Health and Environmental Management</u>
3.05-2	<u>Safety, Health and Environmental Education/Training</u>
3.05-3	<u>Safety Management</u>
3.05-4	<u>Industrial Hygiene</u>
3.05-5	<u>Environmental Management</u>
4.	<u>HUMAN RESOURCES</u>
4.01	<u>Employment</u>
4.02	<u>Time and Attendance</u>
4.03	<u>Pay and Leave</u>
4.04	<u>Performance Management</u>
4.05	<u>Awards</u>
4.06	<u>Training</u>
4.07	<u>Position Description/Management</u>
4.08	<u>Employee Relations</u>
4.09	<u>Occupational Medical Surveillance Program</u>
5.	<u>INFORMATION SYSTEMS ACTIVITIES</u>
5.01	<u>AFM Systems</u>
5.02	<u>Voice/Data/Video Telecommunications</u>
5.03	<u>Information Systems Security</u>
5.04	<u>Information Collection from the Public</u>
5.05	<u>Records Management</u>
5.06	<u>Policy and Procedures Management</u>
5.07	<u>Printed Matter</u>
5.08	<u>Mail and Messenger Service</u>
5.09	<u>IT Resource Planning</u>
6.0	<u>BUDGET AND FISCAL (General)</u>
6.01	<u>CRIS Accountability</u>
6.02	<u>Research Costs</u>
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6.10	<u>Collections</u>
6.11	<u>Accounting/LOTS</u>
6.12	<u>Status of Funds</u>
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6.12-2	<u>Cuff Records</u>
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6.15	<u>Agreement Accounting</u>
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6.15-2	<u>Trust Funds and Reimbursable Agreements</u>
6.15-3	<u>Sales/Exchange Funds</u>
6.15-4	<u>Quarters</u>
6.15-5	<u>Revolving Fund</u>
6.16	<u>Reference Manuals</u>
6.17	<u>Training</u>
6.18	<u>Budget/Fiscal Records Management</u>
7.	<u>CIVIL RIGHTS</u>
7.01	<u>Special Emphasis Programs</u>
7.02	<u>Outreach Efforts</u>
7.03	<u>Recruitment Efforts and Affirmative Action Program</u>
7.04	<u>Persons with Disabilities</u>
7.06	<u>Communication</u>
7.07	<u>Training</u>
8.	<u>EXTRAMURAL AGREEMENTS</u>
8.01	<u>Extramural Agreements Program (General)</u>
8.02	<u>Research Support Agreement (RSA)</u>
8.03	<u>Cooperative Agreements (Specific Cooperative, Trust Fund, and Reimbursable)</u>
8.04	<u>Standard Cooperative Agreements</u>
8.05	<u>Grants and Assistance Type Cooperative Agreements</u>
8.06	<u>Master Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)</u>
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8.09	<u>Individual Memorandum of Understanding</u>

## Attachment II-C - Assurance Statement

SUMMARY ASSURANCE STATEMENT FOR  
(City, State)

Consolidated Assistance, Review, and Evaluation (CARE) Review Team No. (\_\_\_\_) reviewed the administrative management/operations at the (City, State) Location in (Month of Year) under the requirements of the Consolidated Review Program. Attached is a listing of the segments (functions) reviewed and assurances made. Reasonable assurance can be given regarding the Location's administrative management/operations as follows:

- 1) there are sufficient controls and security measures to compensate for any identified risks associated with administrative management/operations and/or their environments;
- 2) the programs' clientele are satisfied with the results/performance of the administrative management/operations;
- 3) administrative management/operations are being operated in a cost-effective manner and comply with applicable laws and regulations;
- 4) there is proper management of the programs' information; and
- 5) administrative management/operations comply with management, financial, accounting, information resources management, budget, and other appropriate standards.

---

(Team Leader Name)  
Team Leader

---

Dated:

---

Stephen Schaefer  
CARE Coordinator

---

Dated:

Approved By:

---

James H. Bradley  
Deputy Administrator,  
Administrative and Financial Management

---

Dated:

## Attachment II-D - Location Personnel Interview Questionnaire

## Consolidated Assistance, Review and Evaluation (CARE) Location Questionnaire

1. What are your comments on the delivery of procurement support and services (supplies, services, equipment, construction, and repair & maintenance)?
2. What are your comments on the delivery of facilities management including physical security, your work space, safety, health and environmental management?
3. What are your comments on the delivery of human resources support and services (benefits, time & attendance, awards, recruitment, etc.)?

4. Are your major duties and responsibilities described in your position description? If you are a supervisor, how often do you review subordinates' position descriptions?
5. Are your training needs reflected on your individual development plan? Are they being met? If not, why not?
6. Comment on your work hours and your ability to take leave.
7. In what ways are you being recognized for the work you do?
8. What are your comments on the delivery of information technology products, support and services (hardware, software, telephone systems, Internet access, etc.)?
9. What is your opinion on Agency issued policies and procedures? Have you come across any that need clarification?

10. What are your comments on the delivery of accounting and financial management support and services (Status of Funds Reports, ARMP, etc.)?
11. What are your comments on the delivery of travel support and services?
12. What are your comments on the delivery of extramural agreements support and services (Specific Cooperative Agreements, CRADAs, Grants, etc.)?
13. How is information disseminated at your Location? What are your suggestions for improvement?
14. Do you feel the Location works as a team? What improvements would you suggest?
15. Besides the things we have already discussed, is there anything that impairs your ability to do your job?

## **Attachment II-E - Sample Opening Conference Notes**

# SAMPLE OPENING CONFERENCE SPEECH

Good Morning

I'm \_\_\_\_\_, CARE Team Leader. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank LC, LAO/T, and the rest of you for allowing us to visit your Location.

This is the 12th (number of years) cycle of the Consolidated Assistance, Review and Evaluation Program, better known as CARE. We are one of 6 teams reviewing 13 locations this fiscal year. We believe this visit will benefit both the Location and the team members.

Before I explain to you what the CARE Program is all about, I'd like to tell you a little bit about CARE Teams and formally introduce the Team members. Teams are comprised of individuals represented by the three organizational levels within ARS--Location, Area and Headquarters. This allows Teams to perform reviews of administrative operations in much the same manner as peer reviews are conducted. We all have regular full-time positions within the Agency; none of us are auditors or examiners. Individuals are chosen based on their unique skills and abilities in their field of expertise.

Now, I'd like to introduce this CARE team to you.

Name team members, titles, Location and background--may consider having team members do this themselves.

Now, I'd like to tell you how CARE came about and why we're here. In the past, ARS measured "quality" management via "conforming to requirements," as specified in laws, Office of Management and Budget (OMB) requirements, General Accounting Office (GAO) standards, etc. To make reasonable assurances that ARS was complying with these requirements, separate administrative inspections or audits were conducted; for example, Mutual Assistance Reviews and Verification Audits. In the late 1980's, ARS also introduced and carried out major quality improvement efforts with such administrative programs as the Location Support Study and Location Automated System Task Force.

Then, in 1989, these inspections and audits moved toward the Total Quality Management effort of de-emphasizing "conforming to requirements" and focusing on "meeting customer expectations," or de-emphasizing the audit-and-inspection approach and focusing on the problem-identification-and-solving approach. In this vein, ARS Administrative Management consolidated as many reviews, inspections, and audits as possible into the single Consolidated Assistance Review and Evaluation (CARE) Program. The goals of the CARE Teams are to:

- **Assist** in a helpful and practical way, those being reviewed to understand what can be done to improve their operations.
- **Help** to make actual changes necessary to improve operations in the true spirit of the President's Management Agenda.
- **Assist** those being reviewed to interpret and understand current policy and procedure guidance.

- **Identify gaps** in available guidance/policy/procedures that require attention in order to meet the needs of Location activities.
- **Promote** efficiency, economy and responsiveness to program needs through the sharing of ideas and techniques for improving administrative processes.
- **Assure** compliance with Federal policies and regulations by officially designated employees.

The goal of the Agency is to review all ARS Locations, including Area Offices and Headquarters approximately every 8 years. It is planned that the CARE reviews will replace or reduce Mutual Assistance Reviews, Procurement Management Reviews, Financial Management and Budget reviews. It will not, however, replace certain reviews outside of ARS; i.e., OIG and GAO audits.

While we're here we'll first tour your facilities to gain a general sense of the research being conducted here.

Then, focusing on customer (and we're all customers at given times) and provider interaction, we're going to conduct a review via personal interviews and functional reviews of the administrative processes here.

Personal interviews have been scheduled with program and administrative individuals. Questionnaires have already been distributed to these people to start them thinking. The purpose of the interviews is to identify everyone's expectations, frustrations, desires, and concerns about administrative services, not just individual gripes--and when I say administrative services, I mean all levels of administrative services impacting you; including those services controlled at Area and Headquarters levels. To the maximum extent possible, the information that is gathered will be kept confidential and no names will be associated with the comments. Also, we need to emphasize that CARE does not deal with EEO/Civil Rights complaints or employee relations issues. As part of our process, we look for assurances that systems are in place to handle these types of issues, but do not deal with specific cases. Also, if anyone here is not scheduled for an interview, but would like to talk to one of us, please see me or another Team member and we'll schedule a time for you.

Then, we're going to perform limited functional reviews of specific administrative areas. This will allow us to understand what and how local administrative service is actually being delivered. I want to emphasize that we will not be auditing your records; but are simply looking to see whether administrative processes overall are being done appropriately and within Agency guidelines.

Through the interviews and functional review, we, as a team, look for trends and try to identify areas of concern, if any--and again, this encompasses all levels of administrative management in ARS. We may also offer recommendations or suggestions to help people work smarter. In addition, throughout the visit, we will be looking for innovative ways that functions are being performed, in order to adopt them ourselves and pass them along to other Locations.

If we can provide assistance or get answers while we're here, we will.

Finally, \_\_\_\_ (day of week) at \_\_\_\_ (time), the results of our review will be passed along to you at the Exit Conference. A written report will be prepared within 6 weeks of the review. LC, LAO/T and AAO (name individuals) will each receive copies and we encourage these individuals to share this report with you. ARS Headquarters Divisions also receive copies of these reports and they and the AAO are responsible for assuring that an action plan is developed for areas of concern.

As a follow up, after all reviews have been completed, the CARE Coordinator maintains a tracking system which emphasizes positive things being done at Locations that could benefit others. The report also addresses trends, areas of concern and actions taken to address those areas. To date, data that has already been collected has enabled Headquarters Administrative and Financial Management Divisions to work at resolving common issues for the benefit of the Agency. One way this has been accomplished is in forming Teams to address specific processes and in revising or, in some cases abolishing policies and procedures.

CARE will not only continue to bring issues to light, but to continually assess issues that have been addressed to ensure end results were as intended. So, you can see that while your specific Location is being reviewed, you are a part of ARS, and as such, your issues and concerns contribute to looking at Agency administrative services as a whole. We, therefore, encourage you to be specific in your concerns and as open and honest as possible.

Again, we're looking forward to visiting with all of you and learning about the research conducted here. We know our review will be disruptive to your operation, but hopefully we can keep it to a minimum.

Are there any questions?

## **Attachment II-F - Sample Closing Conference Notes**

# **SAMPLE EXIT CONFERENCE SPEECH**

As a result of all the information you've provided us via our personal interviews and reviews of specific administrative areas, we've looked for trends; ways to help you work smarter; ways that we can utilize processes here to help other Locations work smarter; how customers and providers of administrative services interact; and problem areas, if any. With this information, we're in a position to make reasonable assurance certifications as required to be in compliance with applicable laws and regulations, and to make recommendations to improve processes.

At this time we want to share with you a synopsis of what will be in the final report. There are nine functional areas that we must comment about in the final report. These areas are:

- General Administrative Management
- Procurement
- Property
- Facilities
- Safety and Health
- Human Resources
- Information Systems and Automated Data Processing
- Budget and Fiscal
- Civil Rights
- Extramural agreements

I'm going to read to you summary statements of our significant findings in each of these individual areas. In the final report, more detailed information will surround the significant findings. Also, I need to emphasize that there will be no surprises in the final report; nothing will be in the report that is not addressed here. Again, in the interest of

time, you may receive a more abbreviated version than what will be in the final report. When the final report is sent to the Location, any areas of concern where an Agency policy is not being adhered to will be marked **Assurance with Exception**, or in very serious situations, **No Assurance**. These areas must be addressed by the Location as to how they plan to correct the situation.

As was mentioned in the opening conference, all reports are looked at for trends, better ways of doing things, etc., for Divisions/Areas to look at problem areas and methods of process improvement. A summary of all Locations reviewed for the year are entered into a CARE trends tracking database that will be available shortly on the Internet. Summary reports are also provided to Agency management so trends can be assessed. Based on some of the information in CARE reports, P&P's have either been updated or even abolished.

Finally, we'll be glad to answer any questions you may have about individual items, but we ask that you wait until I've read you all of the Significant Findings so you can get an overall feel of the findings.

(After reading Significant Findings, ask for questions and then thank Location for their participation.)

# **Attachment III-A**

## **Team Leader Checklist**

# Team Leader Checklist

ITEM

DATE ACCOMPLISHED

## **Immediately After CARE Training for New Members**

CARE Coordinator provides mailing list of team members to Team Leaders

\_\_\_\_\_

Work with Co-Leader/Teams/Locations to set dates of reviews

\_\_\_\_\_

## **Four-Six Weeks Prior to Review**

Call AAO to discuss issues at Location to be reviewed and to assure Location is aware it was selected for review

\_\_\_\_\_

Call LAO/T and LC to explain CARE process and discuss issues at Location. Work with LAO/T on who will be interviewed, scheduling and conference room accommodations, lunch with administrative staff

\_\_\_\_\_

Send Scheduling Letter to Location

\_\_\_\_\_

Conduct conference call with Team to discuss logistics of review, issues at the Location, functional review responsibilities, interview partners, etc.

\_\_\_\_\_

Packet of information for Team Members

Hotel logistics for Team  
Airline schedules for team  
Home telephone numbers for team members  
Which team member(s) will rent vehicles  
Functional areas members are responsible for  
Characteristics package for Location  
Schedule for review (including interview schedule which should have who they will interview, times, room #s)

\_\_\_\_\_

## **One Week Prior to Review**

Call LAO/T and AAO to assure everything is in place for review

\_\_\_\_\_

Prepare Opening/Closing Conference Notes

\_\_\_\_\_

## **During CARE Review**

Call AAO to brief on review significant findings  
Call CARE Coordinator to brief on review findings

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### **After CARE Review**

Four-Six Weeks After Review Submit final CARE report to  
CARE Coordinator (Team input should be incorporated)

---

## **Attachment III-B - CARE Report Critical Path**

## CARE Report Critical Path

Week of Review	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6
Review Team On Site						
	Team Members draft assigned functional write-up and submit draft write-ups to Team Leader					
			Team Leader compiles report and edits writing styles to similar voice			

Week of Review	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6
				Team Leader submits first draft to team and receives comments		
					Team Leader prepares and submits final report from comments received	
						CARE Coordina- tor, Special Assistant to DAAFM, and DAAFM review and sign report.

## **Attachment III-C - CARE Evaluation Forms**

### Location Evaluation of CARE Team

	Excellent	Good	Poor	N/A
<b>Quality of Information and Services Provided</b>				
<b>Overall Performance of Team onsite</b>				
Performance of Individual Team Members:				
<b>Team Leader</b>				
<b>Team Co-Leader</b>				
<b>Team Member</b>				
<b>Team Member</b>				
<b>Team Member</b>				
<b>Team Member</b>				
<b>Team Member</b>				
<b>Team Member</b>				

**Comments:** (Required for any responses of >Poor=, encouraged for any responses of >Excellent=, use back of page if required)

### CARE Team Self-Evaluation

**Scale:** E=Excellent, G=Good, P=Poor

<b>Skills:</b>	Team Leader	Team Co- leader	Team Member	Team Member	Team Member	Team Member	Team Member	Team Member
<b>Willingness to Learn</b>								
<b>Teamwork</b>								
<b>Communication Skills</b>								
<b>Objectivity</b>								
<b>Adaptability to Changing Situations</b>								
<b>Leadership</b>								
<b>Organizational Skills</b>								

**Comments:** (Required for any responses of >P=, encouraged for any responses of >E=, use back of page if required)